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THE

NORTH BRITISH REVIEW.



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THE  
NORTH BRITISH REVIEW.

NOVEMBER, 1844.

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TITLE

# NORTH BRITISH REVIEW!<sup>6</sup>

NOVEMBER, 1844.

ART. I.—*Remedies suggested for some of the Evils which constitute "The Perils of the Nation."* London, 1844.

THIS work is the promised sequel to a former one entitled "The Perils of the Nation, an Appeal to the Legislature, the Clergy, and the Higher and Middle Classes."

The author of these volumes has certainly not exaggerated the dangers of the country, however much he may have failed in pointing out the way of escape from them; and with whatever injustice he has assailed both whole classes of men, and even individuals of whom he conceives (though in this too he is sometimes mistaken) that they do not participate in his views. The dogmatism and self-confidence of his manifold denunciations invest him with a certain mimic air of authority, which, we have no doubt, will have an imposing effect on the more ignorant of his readers—while his own ignorance of Political Economy, both in the long-recognized principles and later modifications of the science, is ingeniously made up for by his frequent professions of a wholesale contempt and intolerance for the subject at large. It is a convenient way by which to get rid of such truths and such topics as look hard on the conclusions of an author, thus to proscribe *en masse* that entire department of human knowledge to which they belong. And yet we cannot see why such matters as Capital and Wages, and Population and Agriculture, must be altogether shunned and abstained from, as if they were not fair or competent objects of investigation, whether with a view to verify all that has been discovered, or to find out all that is discoverable regarding them. They have a substantive reality in the territory of actual and existent things—nor are we able to under-

stand why they should be banished from the territory of human thought. But indeed the thing is impossible; and our very author himself finds it to be so. These obnoxious articles come in his way whether he will or not, and the only manner in which he can dispose of them, is by giving his own views regarding them in place of the views of other people. So that, after all, while he often falls foul of Political Economy, as if to exterminate, or to lay a total extinguisher upon the science, he only brushes aside the Political Economy of others, and this to make room for a Political Economy of his own.

Yet amid all the defects and infirmities of this work, we must do homage to its one redeeming property, which is the high place assigned by its author to moral causes, both in the production of the nation's disease, and in the operation of the proposed remedies. It is refreshing to turn from the dry and the hard economics of our heartless utilitarians, and to read anywhere of a universal Christian education, as being, what we indeed hold it to be, the grand restorative from all our social and political disorders. We only wish that our author had written as intelligently as he has written piously; and that he had refrained from certain zealous ebullitions which, besides that the zeal is without knowledge and without discrimination, carry him at times beyond the limits of candour and modesty. Yet it does mitigate the indignancy that might otherwise be felt at his groundless vituperations, that, without charging them either with malice or dishonesty, they seem more like the effusions of a mind blinded by prejudice or by its own misconceptions—though it is infinitely to be regretted, that the sacred cause, whether of religion or humanity, should thus be discredited by a most palpable ignorance both of the science which he presumes to vilify, and of the authors whom he has ventured to arraign. It is assuredly not the way to speed forward the cause of Philanthropy, to place it, as is done here, in a state of violent disjunction from the cause of truth and reason.

There are certain passages in this work which forcibly remind us of those occasions, when, in virtue of both Science and Scripture having been brought into the false position of a seeming contrariety—a *seeming*, for they never are in real conflict with each other—the result has proved alike injurious to the cause of learning and the cause of sacredness. When Galileo was forced to make his recantations, and on the ground that his discoveries were opposed to the Bible, while we fully sympathize with the eloquent indignation of those who viewed it as an arrest laid on the progress of philosophy, we regard it as a far more grievous and hurtful effect, that the higher reason of the age was placed thereby into an attitude of antipathy and revolt against the au-

thority of revelation. The likeliest occurrence to this in more recent times, was when the speculations of geology came into strong apparent collision with the Mosaic account of the creation of the world; and when the more enlightened friends of Christianity were put to the blush by certain of its injudicious defenders, who, in utter ignorance of the theme, ventured on the field of controversy with a crude yet confident Natural History of their own. And we felt it to be matter of sincere rejoicing, not so much for the soundness of the world's philosophy as for the soundness of its faith, when a reconciliation, deemed satisfactory by ourselves at least, was effected between an indefinite antiquity for the globe (whereof there is a daily accumulating evidence) and even the plainest literalities of the Book of Genesis. There is something strongly analogous to these cases in the religious horror which our author feels, and which he tries to awaken in the minds of his readers, against the science of Political Economy. He, making use of an expression in Holy Writ, stigmatizes it as "science falsely so called"—forgetting that in these words we have the virtual acknowledgment of a science truly so called—so that while there is undoubtedly a false, there may be also a true Political Economy, with the doctrines of which he would do well to acquaint himself. Another phrase, taken by him also from the inspired writings, is "vain philosophy"—a tolerably clear intimation, and on the highest of all authority, that there is a philosophy which is not vain. The works of God, says the Psalmist—and these works must be recognized in the laws and phenomena of human society, as well as in the laws and phenomena of the material creation—the works of God are wonderful, sought out of all them that have pleasure therein. They who would divorce Theology from Science, or Science from Theology, are, in effect if not intention, the enemies of both.

The doctrine of the economists which most calls forth his antipathy, is that promulgated, though not for the first time, by Mr. Malthus, on the subject of Population—a fair enough subject, one might think, both for observation and arithmetic; and on which surely it is competent to state what the conclusions are, without incurring the charge of a profane and injurious reflection, either on the ways of God's providence, or on the principles of His word. It is difficult to see why the capabilities of the species, in regard to its power of increase, should not form in every way as legitimate a topic of inquiry, as do the capabilities of the soil. It is surely just as lawful to count the number of children in a family, as it is to count the number of bolls or quarters raised upon an acre? Or we should like to know why it is to be denounced as criminal to take the census of a country's population at given periods, and on comparing the results of the different



surveys, to announce the fact that the inhabitants of Britain have been doubled within the last forty years ; or that countries can be named where, in the infancy of their agriculture, the same increase has taken place in the marvellously short period of fifteen years ? Again, is it wrong to remark, that in the latter case the marriage of females takes place at averagely an earlier age than it does in the former ; or if tables of Political Arithmetic could be constructed, from which it might appear that this age is 18 in the one case, and 25 in the other, is there ought to provoke the indignation of the virtuous and good, either in the act of collecting such statistics, or in the act of publishing and proclaiming them to the world ? Nay, if it should be found that while there is still indefinite room upon our earth for the enlargement both of its population and agriculture, still that the tendency of the one to increase is faster than that of the other ; and that therefore long before the utmost possible maximum of either has been reached and realized, there might be such a thing as a pressure of the population on the food in various countries, as well as in various ages of the world—must we refrain from meddling with this as an object of thought at all ; or if obtruded upon us as an undoubted and objective certainty by others, must we shut our eyes against it ? We know not a more familiar experience, than that when a premature marriage occurs in a single household, as when a son of the family enters into such an alliance without the means of providing for it, the event is felt by all the members of the domestic circle to be a great inconvenience, and deplored accordingly. Now, where is the hardihood, or where the monstrous impiety of the reflection, that what is true of one household might be true of ten thousand, nay, of a million households ; and that what each severally holds to be undesirable, might be held as undesirable by all jointly—or, in other words, that the evil of improvident marriages might come to be a recognized category throughout a community at large ? There seems no reason why a whole host of truths particular, and all alike, should not be reassembled into a compendious proposition, and so be expanded into a truth general or truth universal. Now this is all that has been done by Mr. Malthus, when propounding his doctrine of Population ; yet to fasten a stigma on this plain result of a very plain deduction, the lessons of experience and the laws of physiology have been equally set at nought. We repeat that all this is quite of a piece with the sensitive, and we shall further call it the senseless antipathy, which would have laid an arrest on the discoveries of astronomical science at the termination of the middle ages ; and which not further back than thirty years ago, would have expunged geology from the encyclopædia of human learning. We have no fear but that from the assidu-

ous labours of a sound Philosophy on the one hand, and a sound Scripture Criticism on the other, a magnificent and unexcepted harmony is sure to emerge between the word of God and the works of God. Such, we believe, is the infallible result that awaits the calm and comprehensive survey of both; but most assuredly it is not to the little piecemeal snatches, or to the restive and fitful effusions of the volumes before us, that we shall be at all indebted for the speeding forward of this glorious consummation.

But that we may do no injustice either to this work or to its author, with whom, and because of the excellence of his main lesson, we hope to be on better terms ere that we take our final leave of him—let us present the reader with a few specimens.

“The doctrine of the criminality of ‘improvident marriages,’ if it were possible to bring it into force, would condemn *seven-eighths* of the young men of our agricultural districts to hopeless celibacy for life.” “Such is the state, and such the prospects to which the modern system of political economy would deliberately consign the great body of our agricultural poor.” “How many valued preachers would be sorely perplexed if they were called upon to preach an honest and faithful sermon on the text, ‘Wo unto them that join house to house, that lay field to field, till there be no place, that they may be placed alone in the midst of the earth.’” “For, in truth, selfishness has given a retaining fee to science, and to that which passes by the name; and so, while the words of infinite wisdom are lightly regarded, men lay house to house, and field to field, and oppress the hireling in his wages, and then plead the authority of a Whately or a Malthus, as something infinitely higher than the lessons of the word of God.” “And this is one reason why the pulpit does not impose a salutary check, and aim at an effective counteraction of these evils. Sad we are to confess, that, to a great extent, and in a variety of ways, the pulpit, in the present day, is either careless of, or even favourably disposed towards this growing mischief. The usual proportion of Christian writers and teachers are timid, and if they approach the subject at all, deal only in vague generalities; while some there are, who, inveigled into the net of a science falsely so called, are actually helping forward various of the crying evils of the day. The test of their evil, and the proof of their guilt, is found in their systematic banishment of the word of God from their whole system of communital economy.” “We aver that in God’s word, and throughout its pages—not in a few places, but in many—there are given doctrines, and reproofs, and instructions in righteousness, for legislators, for statesmen, and for men of wealth and influence; and that the general tenor of these is directly opposed to what a set of philosophers ‘falsely so called,’ of our own times, have conspired to dignify with the name of political economy. And accordingly, and very naturally, as the Bible and they are at variance, they agree to lay the Bible on the shelf, and to assert, that however necessary and supreme in its own department—the concerns of God and the

soul—yet in mere sublunary matters, the management of nations, &c. it is either wholly silent, or speaks without any divine authority, or any claim to our respect.” Lastly, “Our appeal must be to the whole reading public. Of them we ask merely the same reasonable and just decision which was manifested by a distinguished naval officer, when he had waded through a volume on political economy by a celebrated author, in which the chief part of all the woes of the country were traced to one cause, ‘surplus population.’ ‘This cannot be true!’ was his indignant reply to the friend who had lent him the volume, for does not the Bible declare, that ‘in the multitude of the people is the king’s honour; but in the want of people is the destruction of the prince?’”

A multitude of passages similar to those now quoted occur in both volumes; and from which it will be seen that the moral indignation which has prompted these various utterances, proceeds on the imagination that our more recent political economy is at variance with the Bible, both in the dogmata of the science, and in the duties which it proposes for the observance of mankind. And certain it is that many of our economists, perhaps the majority of them, have laid themselves abundantly open to the ridicule at least of their satirical opponents, if not to the severer censorship which is here brought to bear upon them. We can figure nothing more unnatural or more grotesque than the attempt to school down improvident marriages by the circulation of economical tracts among the working classes, and these charged with lessons on the true theory of population—all with the view, let it be observed, of terrifying our citizens and labourers from so precipitate a step, lest the world should come to be over-peopled by it. Verily it is not on such general or such distant considerations, but on something far more personal and proximate to the individual, that men are prevailed upon to regulate each his own conduct, even in the most enlightened walks of society. It were in every way as preposterous to think of moving a ploughman or coalheaver out of his purposes in regard to the state or management of his own little home, by holding out to him the evils which follow an undue multiplication of the species—as of persuading the farmer to change his present and long-established methods of husbandry, and that not on the likelihoods of the next year’s crop, or of what might be realized by himself upon his own acres, but on some magnificent computation as to the capabilities and the prospects of agriculture, along the vista of many future centuries, and throughout the world at large. But this is the very extravagance and folly into which controversialists have run on both sides of the question at issue. If, on the one hand, our people have been told that it is rash to enter too early on the married state, and thereby to aggravate the pressure of the world’s population on the world’s food,—on the other, the proclamation of

a universal license has been sounded forth in their hearing, and that it is safe in this matter to follow the first promptings of nature, or of their own inclination—for that in the yet undeveloped resources of the earth in which we live, there is sustenance for a human family of tenfold a greater magnitude than now walk upon its surface. The folly of thus *philosophizing* the common people into a right habit is alike chargeable upon both the parties in this warfare; and if we seek to reform or to ameliorate either their condition or their habits, it is altogether by another sort of moral dynamics being brought into operation.

Accordingly, in the most full and formal attempt that has yet been made, by any author, to blend the moral with the economical, or to point out the relationship and the mutual influences which subsist between a high standard of character and a high standard of enjoyment among the people—there is nothing more strenuously insisted on, than the utter vanity and insignificance of the endeavour to elevate the condition of the working-classes, by imbuing their minds with the philosophy of Mr. Malthus. It is most assuredly not by placing them under his guidance, but under the guidance of a higher volume than his, even the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament. It is thus, and thus alone, that we look for any permanent enlargement in the state and sufficiency of the common people; nor do we hope that through any other medium than that of Christian education, they will ever realize the promise either of the life that now is, or of the life that is to come. True, we can see no cause why all prudence and all forethought should be so proscribed, as our adversaries would seem to have it, from this department of human affairs—or why marriage, involving, though it does, the most important step in life, should be altogether left to the force of a blind and brutal impulse, as if it were religiously unlawful to make it the subject of deliberation at all, or to mix up with it any of the higher exercises of mind, as if it were the event of all others in a man's history privileged and singled out by this distinction, that his reasoning and reflective nature should have nothing to do with it. “He who provides not for his own,” says the apostle, “and specially for those of his own house, hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel.” Now, we cannot see why this providential care, this *πρόνοια*, should not have some place before the commencement of the family life as well as after it. Still, it is not any calculation on the number of our species that we require at the hands of our peasantry. We have no demand for any other regimen being brought to bear upon them, than that of their moral and religious training, and simply as the possessors of immortal souls—confident as we are, that to be rightly set on the way to heaven, is far the likeliest course both for contentment

and sufficiency in this world. And it matters not to this result, though they should remain profoundly ignorant, to the end of their days, of all that economists have ever written on the law of population. This forms no part, at least, of our specific for the elevation of the working classes. Enough for us that they are educated not in the lessons of political science, but in the lessons of the Gospel; and so are made to participate in the humanizing and enlarging influences of that Christianity which, wherever it takes effect, is sure to tell generally on the intellect and taste, as well as on the principles of men—investing all their higher faculties, the reason, and the understanding, and the conscience, with a more efficient control over the inferior propensities and instincts of their merely animal nature. The tendency of religion, we mean of that religion which cometh by hearing and by the word of God—the fruit of His blessing on well-taught schools and well-served churches—its tendency is to refine, and rationalize, and exalt the whole man, insomuch that in the very gait and appearance of a Christianized peasant, we can discern a person not merely of higher character, but altogether of higher caste than his fellows around him; and in virtue of which he does more than spurn away from him their low and loathsome dissipations. We know not a more pleasing experience, or one that more decisively points out the high-road to a secure and stable condition of sufficiency and comfort for the people of our land, than the almost invariable connexion which obtains between their moral worth, (a worth which can be reared and throughout sustained on no other basis than that of their evangelic tuition) and the general elevation which takes place in their tastes and habits, and whole style of their enjoyments. We know that this can be verified in almost every instance among the regular church-goers of humble life, in the great towns of Scotland. And we could even stake the credit of our assertion, on the, to us, unknown but easily ascertained truth of its holding altogether the same among the workmen and their families, of all grades, who best frequent the chapels and conventicles of our sister country—and this, too, among those employments whether of the mine or of the manufactory, which, apart from religion, are most fitted to degrade and demoralize them. There is nothing which has more impressed ourselves with the paramount efficacy of moral causes, than to find in the Christian household of a hand-loom weaver, where the united earnings did not reach 10s. a-week, an air of decent and humanized comfort, an interior economy whether as it respects the furniture of their clean and orderly apartments or the attire upon their persons, even a well-stored book-case where food for the mind on its humble shelves was purchased out of the hard and honest winnings that might have else been squandered on worth-

less gratifications—and all this, while the operative cotton-spinner of 30s. a-week, at the next door, who lived recklessly because he lived irreligiously, gave forth, in the whole aspect of his ill-habited and ill-conditioned family, every symptom of want and extreme wretchedness. In the one case there was a self-respect as well as a self-command, which was wanting in the other; and on this single difference, the fruit of that best and highest of all education, the education of principle, we believe that the whole alternative between a prosperous and erect on the one hand, or a sunken prostrate mistriven commonalty on the other, is, in the main, suspended. Now, what we hold is, that Christianity is the great civilizer of man—nay, the only agent which can beget that higher tone of habit and character among the people, which leads surely, though insensibly, to a higher standard of enjoyment in the midst of them. And, for the diffusion of such a habit, we seek no more than a right Christian tuition, the accompaniment and the fruit of right Christian institutes; or, in other words, an efficient parochial, as being far the likeliest preparative for an efficient family discipline in the households of our population—satisfied that the pupils of such a discipline will not only begin life well, but will sustain it rightly and respectably throughout all its stages. To induce this finer quality of the soul, there is need of no other influences than such as are brought to bear upon them by the humanizing intercourse of Christian philanthropists and Christian office-bearers in their respective congregations; and need of no other lessons than the lessons of the Old and New Testament. We are sensible that these are not the prescriptions of all Political Economy, yet there is a Political Economy which does recognize all this, nay strenuously recommends it, as being the only specific for all our social disorders. And yet this is the very Political Economy which is singled out for the fiercest invectives of the work now before us—the main article of the indictment, too, being that it has thrown the Bible overboard. We are most unwilling to believe that there is aught here either of the dishonest or the malicious. Yet we cannot fail to desery, in this town-made composition, the conceit and cocknevisism of an author most ludicrously at fault, both respecting the subject and literature of the subject which he has undertaken to deal with.

But a general recognition of the Bible will not avail for vindication, if violence have been done to any of its specific precepts; and such is the violence which our author charges on the advocates of the Malthusian doctrine, more especially when they found on their notions or their fears of a redundant population, a dissuasive against early marriages. The passages on which he founds his counter-precept or counter-principle to this are, first,

the benediction pronounced by God on our first parents, immediately after their creation, when he said, "Be fruitful and multiply, and replenish the earth;" and, secondly, the same benediction, for in both instances the words are uttered in the form of a blessing, and not of a commandment, when He says to Noah and his sons, immediately after the earth had been unpeopled, and the world had been turned into a wilderness before them, "Be fruitful and multiply, and replenish the earth." Such was the power graciously conferred by God upon our species, and in virtue of which the wide and desolate expanse could, in a few generations, be transmuted into the blissful abode of thousands of families, nay, of nations, that, in as many centuries, might overspread the face of our globe. It would, therefore, appear that in regard to this power of multiplying, the prolific virtue wherewith our species has been endowed—the philosophy of Malthus is very much at one with the Bible, which informs us of our race having been so constituted, that from but one pair not only might a single region within a limited and calculable period, but even the whole globe might be fully peopled in the course of ages. It is a power which, of course, would suffer diminution with every shortening of human life—though it survived to the days of Noah, notwithstanding the abridgment which then took place in the longevity of mankind. And there is no reason to believe that any abridgment which may have taken place since, has put the benediction, given to both the first and second progenitors of the human family, beyond the reach of accomplishment. The narratives of Scripture give abundant testimony to the rapid increase in the numbers of mankind, shortly after each of these great starting-points—the Creation and the Flood. And as history is our sole informant then, so to history and observation do we look as our informants still, in regard both to the facts of their past and present increase, and to the capabilities of their future increase on the part of our species. And surely on this subject we have a whole host of testimonies, would we not shut our eyes against them—in the numerous colonizations both of former times, and which are now going forward, when the mother-country becomes too narrow or yields not enough of sustenance for her increased and increasing population—in the censuses of our own and other nations—most of all, in the pregnant fact that, wherever the elements of a fertile yet unoccupied soil with a healthy climate, and a secure government are conjoined, there a rapid and multiple progression in the number of inhabitants is the uniform and unfailing consequent, as in Van Diemen's Land and Australia and Canada and most palpably of all in the vast regions of central North America, from which we might gather how soon, by the expansive force of population, and did no obstacles intervene, the patri-

archal benedictions of Genesis might come to be realized in a world teeming to the uttermost with the families which overspread its surface. Even the most bigoted of our antagonists, could they only keep their theological antipathies for a moment at abeyance, would scarcely deny the conclusion, that the same prolific energy in our race which is to carry the world to this its maximum of occupiers, were competent, over and above, to the peopling of other worlds, if but access were had to them; and that, debarred from this access, there behoved to be either a virtuous restraint or a vicious outlet on the tendency to population, seeing that the force which could people twenty worlds, might easily tend to over-people one. Now, all which the disciples of Malthus need to contend for is, that what holds true of the world at large, might also hold true of particular sections or territories in the world, as indeed is abundantly manifest by the frequent emigrations from old to newly settled lands. So that, when the adequate facility for such emigration does not exist, there must be that very pressure of the population on the food, the slightest intimation of which is sure to call forth the outcries, in certain quarters, of the most fierce and unmeasured indignation. It is true, the advocates of the Malthusian theory farther contend, that the pressure may be felt long before the agriculture of any country has reached the extreme limit of its productiveness; and this because the tendency to an increase of population outstrips the tendency to an increase in the means of subsistence. Whether it does so or not, is a pure question of observation; and, at all events, it should disarm the prejudice of religionists, when told of a physiological law, in virtue of which a world might be peopled from a single family, that it is a law announced to us in the Bible, and that to quarrel with it is in fact to impeach the wisdom and the ways of God, as set forth both in the book of experience and the book of revelation. Let their repugnance to the practical lesson of the Malthusians be what it may, it should reconcile them, one might think, to the physiological dogma of the sect, that the very passages of Scripture which themselves quote, do necessarily involve it—so that in those furious denunciations which occur so frequently in the volumes before us, the author's knowledge of nature, and his understanding of the sacred record, seem to be equally at fault.

It is not, however, against the doctrine as viewed physiologically, but against it as treated practically and morally, that the main objection of our author lies. When simply regarded as a dogma or truth in Natural History, he might allege no great discrepancy between it and the Bible. It is with the ethical injunction which has been founded on the dogma, that he holds his chief quarrel—or when it is spoken of as a duty, a matter of



righteous obligation, to refrain from early marriages. This he proscribes as the utterance of a vain philosophy, in direct conflict or collision with the sacred command of Scripture, to "be fruitful and multiply, and replenish the earth." We shall not avail ourselves here of the distinction between a benediction and a bidding—though "to be fruitful" is certainly not a precept laid upon man, but an endowment conferred by God, such an endowment as enabled man to multiply and replenish the earth. We shall, however, defer to the author's own understanding of these words—as if they meant not only that God enabled man, but that He enjoined him thus to multiply and thus to replenish. All which we need to contend for is, that man is not laid thereby under the obligation either to fill the earth beyond what it can yield for his subsistence, or to fill it faster than subsistence is found for him. Or, in opposition to this, will the author insist upon it, that because of the utterance given forth to Adam and to Noah—the first at the infancy of the world, and the second immediately after its total desolation—there lies a perpetual obligation on men at all times and in all circumstances, and an obligation amounting to this—that as soon as it is physically competent for any man to fulfil the functions of the married state, so soon it is morally incumbent on him to enter thereupon? Are we to understand that every delay beyond this is criminal; and that from the moment of his arriving at the requisite maturity for such a relationship, he, by every week of postponement, is lengthening out the period of his guilt, because of disobedience to a divine commandment? We should like to know if the meaning be, that a state of celibacy *per se* is a state of guilt; and that no such prudence can be alleged as might convert it into a state of innocence, or no such principle as might convert it into a state of virtuous self-denial? The inhabitants of St. Kilda, amounting to about a hundred, have a few allotments of land parcelled out among the families; and the practice there is to defer each marriage, long, it may be, after it has been proposed and agreed upon, till one of these allotments shall fall vacant. Must the command of multiply and replenish be so understood as to overbear this necessity? Or are the parties in such delay to be charged, and simply because of their delay, with a profane defiance to the authority of God? The same necessity, with the same consequent practice, obtains on a larger scale in the kingdom of Norway. Must the moral category of our author be proclaimed there too; and are the young of both sexes to be told of their being grievously and unchristianly in the wrong, because they have so resolutely adhered for generations to those habits of forbearance and control, in virtue of which their territory, sterile as it is, is found to uphold the best-conditioned pea-

santry in Europe? In our own country the necessity is not so palpable, because more disguised amid the complex relationships of British society. But though apt to be lost sight of when the subject is looked at generally or nationally, it is not the less felt individually; and of the vast majority may it be affirmed, that there is an interval of years between the age of puberty and the age of competent provision for the expenses of a distinct and separate household. And again we ask, whether is it better in this department of human affairs, that the blindfold impulse shall carry all before it, or that the impulse shall be regulated and restrained by the consideration of what is due to self-respect, in securing a decent and seemly maintenance; or of what is due to a parentage who might require the help of their own offspring to succour and sustain them? Is the command to multiply and replenish, given to the first patriarchs of a world then untenanted—is it of that standing universal obligation, and withal of a character so instant and imperative, as to overbear either the prudence which would suggest the first of these considerations, or the principle and natural affection which would suggest the second of them? All we can say for ourselves is, that we do not so understand it—nay, marvel that so very peculiar an ethics should have been raised on so slender a foundation. Of the presumption and temerity which have prompted the outrageous abuse of those who cannot join either in the interpretation of these sayings in Genesis, or in the application here made of them, we feel it better to say nothing.

But more than this. Not only do the Scriptures afford no warrant for the violent outcry here made against our more recent Political Economy—they enable us to make positive exhibition of the harmony which obtains between what an enlightened science pronounces to be true, and an enlightened Christianity (by which we mean no other than the Christianity of the Bible,) pronounces to be right and good. It is fortunate for our argument, that the circumstances of the Christian Church called forth the Apostle Paul to his wise and well-weighed deliverance upon this subject—and in which he strikingly evinces the same tact, and discrimination, and delicacy, which are so conspicuous in his whole treatment of another question, that, in the hands of men less gifted than himself, might have proved a topic of most difficult and unmanageable casuistry—we mean the question which so agitated the disciples of his time, respecting meats and days, and the ceremonies and rites of Judaism. We could almost speak of it as being singly and of itself an evidence of his inspiration, when we observe—both on this question and on that of marriage—with what dexterity, or rather with what profound and admirable judgment, he clears his way among the three distinct

categories of the *obligatory*, and the *lawful*, and the *expedient*. Availing ourselves of this nomenclature, we should say of Paul, that, in regard to the first of these terms, he held it not obligatory upon his converts to adopt the Jewish observances—nay, (witness his Epistle to the Galatians,) he strenuously resisted the imposition of them as such. But, in regard to the second term, he held it lawful—that is, allowable—as carrying in it no infraction of any binding or positive duty, to do either the one or the other—as, for example, to eat flesh or not to eat it. And, in regard to the third, the sentence given forth by him was, that though both things were lawful, yet, at certain times and in certain circumstances, both things might not be expedient; and thus, while lawful to eat, it was on given occasions expedient not to eat for the sake of the weaker brethren. He accordingly, in one case, submitted to have his head shorn, nay, even went so far as to circumcise Timothy “because of the Jews;” while, in another case, he refused to the false brethren the concession of circumcising Titus, and this lest they should exalt a mere rite or circumstantial of Judaism to an equal rank with the great essentials of Christianity. Such at the same time, was his respect for expediency, by which we mean not a selfish or political but Christian expediency, or what is best and most expedient for the good of human souls, that on his mind—and on every mind such as his of highest spiritual philanthropy and patriotism—it is an expediency which acts with all the force of a most urgent obligation; and hence the noble declaration regarding what in itself he held to be a thing of indifference,—“Wherefore, if meat make my brother to offend, I will not eat flesh while the world standeth, lest I make my brother to offend.”

Now, in all this, we recognize, to a great extent, an analogy between his treatment of the ceremonial and his treatment of the marriage question; and did we carry the same three elements along with us, it might help to a sound decision on the place, with its relative bearings, which marriage holds in the ethical system of the Bible. First, then, it is obvious, that the ordinance of marriage does not take rank with the duties of absolute and universal obligation. It is not obligatory on all in the same way that the virtues of the decalogue are obligatory on all, else the apostle would never, in any circumstances, have consented to a dispensation from it. He would not have done this evil that good might come, or, for the sake of any advantage to the Christian cause, have absolved his converts from the observance of any of the express and unqualified precepts of Christianity. But this is what he does in reference to marriage. He says to the unmarried that it is good for them to abide unmarried—that is, provided they have the requisite self-command to abstain from

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licentiousness—a gift which he estimates so highly that he would it were possessed by all men, so that all, for the time being, might remain unmarried like himself. And as Paul evidently points to celibacy as being, in that special emergency of the Church, a higher moral state than the state of marriage—so our Saviour before him as evidently points to the faculty of maintaining a virtuous celibacy as being a higher moral accomplishment, than a bare virtuous fidelity to the engagements and duties of the married life. (Matt., xix. 11.) Nevertheless, and as this higher virtue is that to which all men are not competent, marriage, though not a thing of imperative obligation on all, is lawful to all. And, accordingly, we read, that “if thou marry, thou hast not sinned, and if a virgin marry, she hath not sinned;” and therefore the Apostle says, “I spare you.” But the third element, or that of expediency, also enters into the question; and to this consideration the Apostle yields, which he never would have done had marriage been a duty of unexcepted and irreversible obligation. And so he tells his disciples that he reckons it good, because of the present necessity, not to marry, and that, though there are circumstances which, when they compel a marriage, it is well, yet, when they do not compel a marriage, it is better. Yet, amid all this latitude of acquiescence, there runs a vein of steady, unfaltering, consistent principle, inso-much that no expediency whatever is permitted to force the surrender of a sacred and unchangeable morality. And so, while our great Apostle forbids marriage to none, he recommends that all who purely and righteously can, should abstain from it. He ventures on a hazardous and difficult pathway, yet gloriously acquits himself, as he does on the question of meats and days, of all its varieties, and through its hardest passages; and the lessons he has given forth are,—It is better, in some circumstances, to remain single than marry: It is better, in all circumstances, to marry than be licentious.

And this conclusion, we are persuaded, is in full accordance with the general, the practical understanding on the subject of marriage, which obtains and is acted on throughout the society at large of Protestant Christendom. The times are changed, no doubt, since celibacy was canonized as a virtue; but most certainly this has not been replaced by the opposite principle of marriage being canonized as a virtue, or still less of its being held as a thing of permanent and indispensable and withal universal obligation. An obligation, and that, too, of a most sacred character, it unquestionably is, when the only alternative is either a state of matrimony, or a habit, nay, a single act of criminal indulgence. But we appeal to the conscience and religious feeling even of the most enlightened and exalted of our spiritual

men, whether, when the alternative is presented of the married or single state, the one characterized by a strict fidelity, and the other by as strict and unviolated a chastity—whether they can bring themselves to look on a preference of the former to the latter in the same light in which they regard a preference of justice to dishonesty, or of truth to falsehood, or of generosity to grinding and hard-hearted avarice. It was altogether a factitious sentiment, conjured up by superstition, when a merit and moral character were annexed to celibacy, as placed by the side of marriage; but it is fully as much a factitious sentiment, conjured up in this instance by the argumentative effort to run down one economical theory and to exalt another, when a merit and moral character are annexed to marriage as placed by the side of celibacy. Both are allowable, nay, examples are often realized when both are beautiful in their kind—as when a philanthropy like that of Howard's demands exemption from the distracting cares of a family; or, descending to humbler and commoner life, when marriage is forborne for years, nay, often altogether, that parents might be upheld in respect and comfort onwardly to their graves—or that the orphans of some dear and departed relative might find protection under the roof of one of their own kindred who has adopted them as his own. In such cases as these we but recognize the varieties of Christian excellence, and should deem it a singular absurdity, if, giving way to our author's overstrained application of the precept to replenish and multiply, we should, under the tuition of his ethical philosophy, be led to withhold our admiration of them. At the same time, while we refuse to call good evil, let it be equally our care and concern not to call evil good. There is no one virtue which has the property or the power to sanctify the violation of another. Celibacy is lawful, and may often be expedient. But licentiousness is a crime, the guilt of which no expediency can obliterate; nor can any strength of benevolence, though carried to the summit of a romantic elevation, ever undo the condemnatory sentence of the Bible against all impurity, whether of heart or conduct, or discharge us from that holiness without which no man can see God—without which no man can find admittance into the heaven where nothing that defileth shall enter. The supererogation of one duty does not justify the sacrifice of another.

Now such are the views of all with whose writings we happen to be acquainted among the advocates for the recent doctrine of population; and such, more especially, are the views and sentiments of Mr. Malthus himself. The very terms of *moral restraint*, and *moral preventive check*, which this philosopher has devised to express his proposed remedy against the evils he has so clearly

and forcibly pointed out, should have protected him from the rash and intemperate attacks of the author of these volumes. Instead of which they but transport him to a vehemence still more outrageous than before; and with a force of antipathy against which it were vain to argue—partaking, as it does, far rather of the sensitive than the rational—does he proceed to denounce all the supporters of this obnoxious theory, as if they were the apostles of vice or of an unbridled licentiousness. So great indeed, and so passionate, is the repugnance which is felt by him, that he seems at times as if writing under the impulse of a morbid affection—an affection which so far distempers and discomposes, as not only to blind him against the demonstrations of scientific truth, but as causes him to forget the still higher claims both of justice and modesty.

But let us overlook these infirmities of our author in the all-absorbing importance of his subject. His imagination obviously is, that the inculcation of a few years' virtuous celibacy from the time of opening manhood—and this to subserve the speculation of Mr. Malthus—would fall utterly powerless on the minds and habits of our rising generation, and so bring a fearful flood of immorality, with all its disorders, upon the world. And the imagination were a well-grounded one, had we no other counteractive against the else ungovernable passions of youth, than only this doctrine of population, or any other lesson indeed of merely economical science. The proposal, as acted upon by Marseet and Martineau, and others, to bring about a general postponement of marriages, and lessening of their number, by the circulation of popular tracts charged with the philosophy of the subject; or rather pointing out in a plain familiar way, and for the benefit of the popular understanding, the effect of these premature alliances on the labour market—this we have ever held to be a most ridiculous undertaking, a truly grotesque and unpractical method for the accomplishment of the object which it professes. It is not most assuredly on the strength of any such patriotic or general calculations, or to the demonstration, however clear and resistless, of the connexion which obtains between the rate of matrimony and the rate of wages—it is not to any new lesson coming out of the new light which has been shed upon these topics—that we look for aught like an operative or efficient remedy against the evils, whether of an over-peopled earth or over-peopled country. Nature and Christianity both have provided other remedies and other counteractions, which were in vigorous and wholesome operation long before Malthus was ever heard of, and the operation of which might be continued, nay augmented with most salutary influence still, apart altogether from the reasonings or the dogmata of any economic school. We hardly think

that even our author—looking with an eye of practical observation on society as it stands—we cannot think that even he would refuse the affirmation of its not only holding true in point of fact, that the great majority of young men and young women do not marry, but of its being most desirable in point of convenience that they should not marry at the first bidding of inclination, after the attainment of a sufficient maturity for having families of their own. Sure we are, that if he did proclaim it as a moral category, that the first visitation after this of the sexual desire was of itself the intimation of a duty, an absolute, binding, imperative duty, for proceeding to its immediate but legitimate gratification in the way of marriage, he would be reclaimed against in almost every household of grown-up sons and daughters throughout the land. With all his antipathies to the idea of a check, when spoken of by the lips of a philosopher, yet is this very check almost universally acted on, and throughout all ranks and degrees of the people—and not as a dictate of philosophy, but as a plain dictate of common sense, or of prudence giving way to a felt and obvious necessity. There is not a considerate parent anywhere, not a wise and virtuous matron, who would not, on the headlong marriage of any son of her's without the means for the maintenance of a separate family—who would not lament the case of her own overburdened household, as feelingly as ever Malthusian poured forth his warnings or his sorrows over the case of an over-peopled nation. It would be felt and deprecated as a great calamity by ninety-nine parents out of a hundred; and the knowledge of its being so felt and so deprecated, acts with controlling, and, we should say, salutary influence on the immediate parties themselves in this transaction—so as to put it off by longer or shorter periods to a more convenient season. In short, there has been for ages a preventive check in powerful operation, and without Mr. Malthus having ought the blame of it, in virtue of which there is not a country in Europe, we will venture to affirm, where, on the average, there is not the interval of years at least between the age of puberty and the age of marriage. Here then, in deed and in reality, is a period of human life, forced, whether he will or not, on our author's contemplation; and which it will not do to charge on the political economists, for, in truth, it is the actual fruit of circumstances as felt and reasoned upon, not by them, but by the every-day men and women of our every-day world. What then will our author make of this? Will he arraign the order of Providence, and tell us of such a constitution of things that it is vicious and wrong, and should be put an end to? Or, to escape from our conclusion, will he take it up as a question not of earthly prudence, but of heavenly and divine principle—making his appeal from experience to the Bible, or from the wisdom of man to the

wisdom of God? We follow him there, and ask, where is the passage from which any confident or unequivocal inference can be drawn, against the single state of those who have arrived at the requisite physical maturity for marriage, as being in itself unlawful? We are aware of the vices peculiar to such a state, and of which the men whom he calumniates are in every way as intolerant, and against which they lift as honest and loud a denunciation as the author himself does. As to the vices of such a state, there is no one who questions their sinfulness. But we ask, is the state itself—the state without its vices—is that sinful? We have already seen that Christianity, so far from proscribing the state, in certain circumstances recommends it. But we shall not avail ourselves of this argument. Enough for our cause, that Christianity does not forbid the state: but instead of this, presupposes it, and provides it accordingly with the requisite duties, and the requisite directions. In other words, so far from obliterating this stage in the history of a man's life, it is one of her beautiful offices to cultivate and adorn it—telling us what its appropriate graces and what its appropriate virtues are—enjoining the young men at one place, not that they should marry, but to be sober-minded; and at another, not that they should marry, but to be strong, and to overcome the evil one. We do not say that Christianity anywhere forbids marriage; but it is sufficient for us that she nowhere commands it—treating it in fact as a thing of indifference, save in that exceptional case (1 Cor. vii., 9.) where we are told that it is better to marry, not than to live single, but better to marry than to live under the tyranny and the torment of such passions as war against the soul. But while it points out this as the only lawful method for their indulgence, it tells us of other methods in which to dispose of them; and so, while it denounces a vicious, it proclaims its approval of a virtuous celibacy, and thereby its toleration of celibacy itself—As when, instead of bidding its disciples indulge in any way, even in the way which is legitimate and allowable, it bids them flee youthful lusts, and mortify their earthly affections; nay, crucify the evil desires of an evil and accursed nature. The author plentifully arraigns others for casting off the authority of Scripture; but what are his own freedoms with the Sacred volume? By the providence of God there is a certain stage, longer or shorter, in the course of our probation here below, which must be described by every one who reaches manhood—that is the period, while it lasts, of manhood in a state of singleness. The Bible tolerates the state, nay, bestows upon it the most expressive of all sanctions, the precepts of its own high and pure morality. But this author deprecates the state, nay, would do away with it altogether, and so supersede the precepts. He would so intermeddle with the order of human



life as completely to annul this part of our virtuous discipline—changing at his own pleasure the arrangements of that school in which our Heavenly Teacher exercises and prepares His children for eternity. It is curious to observe of a writer so fond and liberal of rebuke towards those who differ from him, for what he is pleased to represent as their daring impiety—how he exalts his own wisdom, not only over the truths of a science which he obviously has never studied, but over the lessons of that Scripture which he sadly misinterprets and misunderstands.

We cannot imagine a more grievous impeachment on the wisdom, if not on the rectitude of the precepts in Scripture, addressed to human nature, and with the purpose, no doubt, to purify and exalt it—than to be told of these precepts that human nature is beyond the reach of being elevated or amended by them. Yet this is what we are in effect told by the author of these volumes, who represents everywhere a state of singleness as being incompatible with a state of virtue, and that so long as we suffer men to continue in that state, we do virtually abandon them to all sorts of dissolute and ruinous excess. And in confirmation of this, it is a deplorable view which he gives of the common people in many parts of England, and for which we apprehend that there is too much reason. We can well remember the surprise depicted on the universal countenance of a Parliamentary committee, when, in our examination before them, we made the statement of a country parish in the north, where no illegitimate birth had occurred for several years. We have no doubt that it was the contrast with the observation which each had of his own neighbourhood, that excited this astonishment, though most certainly there are many districts, nay, provinces in Scotland, where the mention of such a degree of virtuousness would not have been so wondered at. Another thing is equally certain—that whatever other account might be given for this higher comparative purity of habit in our own land, it most assuredly is not due to the prevalence of its earlier marriages. It is to the parishes of England that you must look for these, where a legal provision for the poor has exempted the people from the necessity of foresight and care for themselves; and not to Scotland, or at least to those parts and parishes of Scotland where a legal and compulsory provision is unknown. And we do hold it a most instructive exhibition, and at the same time as bearing most adversely on the views and reasonings of our author, when we find that, in the country of improvident marriages, there is the greater number, and in the country of more prudent, and so of later marriages, there is a less number of illegitimate children. But without looking beyond our own territory, the same lesson might be drawn from the retrospect of the past as compared with present times. For

the days were—though these are now rapidly disappearing—of a still higher purity, when the marriages were in general postponed for months, often for years, after the virtuous attachment had been formed, and the matrimonial engagement been entered on, and this with the express purpose of making out a sufficient preparation for the expenses of the future household. The providings, the *plenishings*, chiefly under the superintendence of the destined bride's mother, these rising by successive accumulations into a goodly pile of linens and garments, and many other stores or articles of housewifery, far beyond our skill or ability to particularize—these exhibited with triumphant complacency to assembled neighbours before the bridal day, as serving to mark the respectable outset and outfitting of the young couple,—these are not yet forgotten, nay, in some measure, are still practised, and may yet be revived in all their original strength, and with all the wholesome influence which they had then on the social and economical state of our Scottish peasantry. Now here was Malthusianism in perfection, and yet with all purity. The married life was not abandoned under this system. It was only somewhat abridged, and with the best effect on the comfort and freedom of its remaining years—freedom from that intolerable bondage of debt, under which so many of our poorer families are now borne down, to a destitution and a dependence which overhang them to the last moment of their earthly existence. Neither let it be said, that this prolongation of the single state, grounded on such a principle, and animated throughout by the aims and the prospects of such an honourable termination, had any deteriorating influence on the character of the parties, so as to land them in those grovelling and illicit indulgences which our author, judging, we fear, from the habits and the corruptions of a neighbourhood far more sunken in profligacy than any which we have had the opportunity of contemplating, apprehends to be inevitable. The influence of such a state, with its aspirations, and its hopes, and its efforts, is altogether in the opposite direction—that is, to recall the sexual feelings, and to fix and concentrate them upon one object, and this, too, in the form of a hallowed and hallowing affection, under which all the delicacies of a virtuous love serve to guarantee and to confirm all the decencies of a virtuous celibacy. There cannot be a more entire and diametrical antithesis than obtains between the sentiments and habits which it is the genuine tendency of this affection to foster upon the one hand, and upon the other those low and loathsome dissipations which are brought forward in such painful, such prominent relief by our author; and all the guilt and brutality of which, he would fain charge on what he regards as the demoralizing philosophy of Mr. Malthus. It is a charge which, long ere that philosophy

made its appearance, has been experimentally refuted, and on a large scale—that is, by the manners and observances of a whole people. And this not in one instance only, but in many, as in Scotland and Switzerland and Norway, and other examples, whether of nations or of provinces and districts which have occurred in the history of the world. The truth is, that love, in its state of abeyance or of probation, as it may be termed, as being still at a distance from its full and final gratification, so far from its general effect being to vitiate and degrade, acts with antagonist force towards a reverse conclusion, being not only fitted by its own native influences to purify and exalt, but often leading to the very highest developments of character. There is surely nothing discordant or at all dissonant with this in the spirit of those beautiful and heart-stirring songs which have so long been the favourite lyrics of our own peasantry. But descending from the romance to the practical realities of our subject, who does not see that such a course of discipline is favourable to all the virtues, and fitted to nurture, though it may be in the school of necessity, an energy and self-command, and withal a frugal and persevering industry, which of itself is the best security for the independence and sufficiency and well-conditionedness of their future lives? Even the ruling passion by which they are actuated is of itself a guide and a guardian against all pernicious and wasteful excesses. This season of anticipation is thus capable of being turned to a most precious account, and within the memory of those now living, was actually turned to such account throughout the great majority of our parishes in Scotland. The moral and prudential influences of a marriage in prospect, form the best preparatives for all the future exigencies of the married life.

But that we may give a clearer and more convincing view of the matter, let us trace the operation of the two adverse systems in a single parish. It is within our recollection to have read in the minutes of evidence taken before a Parliamentary committee of a parish in Kent, or at least in one of the maritime counties along the south of England, where the witness complained of the sad oppression under which they laboured, from the number of labourers for whom they could get no profitable work—a most frequent and familiar complaint in many thousands of parishes throughout our sister kingdom; and which, despite of all the argument, and, we may well add, all the anger and violence of his adversaries, may ever be appealed to as so many living exemplifications of the truth of Malthus' theory. On being asked whether no measures of relief had been adopted—the reply was, that upon one occasion an emigrant ship had taken off forty of the families. When again put to him, whether this did not very materially lighten their burden, the reply was—not in the least, for that on

the very next Sunday forty couples had been called in church, and who, immediately on being married, took possession of the cottages which had been abandoned. We have no doubt that all of these were, for some period at least, whether shorter or longer, under the operation of that very preventive check, the very naming of which sounds so execrably in the ears of our author. And we have better hopes of his own countrymen than not to believe that many of them—would we could say, after the sad and revolting exhibition which he has put forth of their vices, that all of them—while thus biding their time, were under the operation not of the immoral but of the moral preventive check; and so were not only living in the resolute maintenance of those virtues which are proper to their present state, but were busily employed on the strength of their frugal and sober and industrious habits, in making proper and right preparations for their future well-being. We are quite aware that in a parish suffered to go loose from all Christian regimen, where there is not an adequate number of schools scripturally taught, and where there is no church for the people rightly disciplined and rightly administered—we are quite aware that in such a parish, more especially if the promises of a poor-rate have exempted them from all dependence on their own exertions for the sufficiency of their own maintenance—we can well understand how, in such melancholy circumstances of neglect and abandonment, there might be a universal relaxation both of all prudence and all principle. We can only say, that if such be the state of England, we must not suffer the example of one nation to infect the whole world—nor because of the dissoluteness which is here ascribed to her peasantry and her working-classes, must we therefore libel and calumniate the peasantry and the working-classes of every other country in Europe. Certain we are that there lies up in many a population that we ourselves have witnessed, the capability of far better things; and, believing as we do in the identity of human nature all the world over, we shall not arrogate for our own countrymen a monopoly of those virtues and habits to which we are confident that, by right institutions rightly worked, all might be conducted. And here is the way in which the matter would proceed with a parish under such a regimen. There, in the first place, would be no such accumulation of supernumeraries, as was complained of in Kent—that being the genuine product of the foregone reckless marriages, which the system established there is so directly fitted to foster and to multiply. And, in the second place, as to the current marriages, they would proceed not so as to outrun, but so as to replace the vacancies just as they occurred, gradually, and in the course of nature, by the process of one generation succeeding another. Such is the strength of the prin-

ciple of population, as ordained by Him who is the author of our frames, that the marriages would proceed as fast as the openings, whether for the residence of new families, or for such employment and wages as might yield them an adequate maintenance. But (what we, as Malthusians, hold to be desirable,) these marriages would not proceed faster than the openings, and this on the strength of a prudence and a self-respect and a self-command on the part of men capable of other and higher influences than those of a blind and headlong appetency, because God had "given to them more understanding than the beasts of the field, and made them wiser than the fowls of heaven"—a forbearance, theirs however, not at the bidding of Malthus, not in obedience to the lessons or the demonstrations of Political Science, but the spontaneous product of their own tastes, humanized and elevated by that most potent of all civilizers—a Christian education. The effect were greatly enhanced by a good education of letters being superadded to, or rather based upon, what has been well termed the education of principle—or, in other words, by the establishment of well-taught schools for the people, along with well-served churches. And it would go still farther, and that speedily, to raise the general tone and habit of the families, should Christian philanthropists, whether in the capacity of office-bearers or not, feel such an interest as to take an active charge of their advancement and well-being—as those zealous and conscientious elders of Scotland do, who assume each a district, and make themselves the familiars and influential friends of the various households over which they expatiate. It is not to be told how soon there ensues a sensible amelioration, both economically and morally, when any given neighbourhood is thus constituted, as it were, into one great family, under the surveillance of an efficient clergyman, who speaks home to their consciences on the Sabbath, and, along with his coadjutors in this blessed enterprise both of piety and true patriotism, intermingles with them through the week in all the acts and attentions of Christian charity. The very intercourse with their superiors tells in inducing upon them a certain higher caste and finer complexion than heretofore; and just by engaging them with higher fellowships and higher topics than any to which they had been previously accustomed. Even the older inhabitants of a vicinity thus cultivated and thus cared for, under the softening of a kindness which they had seldom experienced amid the general neglect and abandonment to which our working-classes have been doomed for several generations, or under the appeals now made to their religious sensibilities and fears—even many of these would give way before the new and unwonted power which had been thus brought to bear upon them. But it would operate far more surely and

irresistibly upon the young, through the medium of Sabbath and week-day schools—but most of all under the pulpit and household ministrations of a devoted clergyman, followed up by the efforts of a zealous parochial agency, thoroughly intent upon the objects of their high and holy undertaking, and giving themselves to their work perseveringly and in perfect good earnest. It is no marvel and no mystery to us, that, by the energies of our ecclesiastical system, such a transformation should have taken place both in the moral and the economical state of Scotland from 1698 to 1717—the state of the country at the former period being deposed to by Fletcher of Saltoun, and at the latter period by the celebrated writer, Daniel De Foe. The following are the pictures or representations given by each of them respectively, at the several dates which we have now specified.

The first extract is from Fletcher of Saltoun :

“ There are at this day in Scotland (besides a great number of families very meanly provided for by the church boxes, with others, who with living upon bad food, fall into various diseases,) 200,000 people begging from door to door. These are not only no ways advantageous, but a very grievous burden to so poor a country; and though the number of them be perhaps double to what it was formerly by reason of the present great distress, yet in all times there have been about 100,000 of these vagabonds, who have lived without any regard or submission either to the laws of the land, or even those of God and Nature, fathers incestuously accompanying their own daughters, the son with the mother, and the brother with the sister. No magistrate could ever discover or be informed which way any of these wretches died, or that ever they were baptized. Many murders have been discovered among them; and they are not only a most unspeakable oppression to poor tenants, (who if they give not bread or some sort of provision to perhaps forty such villains in one day, are sure to be insulted by them,) but they rob many poor people who live in houses distant from any neighbourhood. In years of plenty, many thousands of them meet together in the mountains, where they feast and riot for many days; and at country weddings, markets, burials, and other the like public occasions they are to be seen, both men and women, perpetually drunk, cursing, blaspheming, and fighting together.”

Such was the state of Scotland at the end of her religious wars and persecutions in the 17th century, when the ministry of the Gospel had been suspended throughout all her parishes, and the virtuous discipline of her Church had been broken up or sadly interrupted for many years—beside that the Act for the establishment of parochial schools was repealed. The picture is truly a revolting one, though not more so than that given by our author of the moral condition of the peasantry at this moment in many of the hamlets and parishes of England. It appears, how-

ever, from very distinct historical documents, that this state of things subsided almost *per saltum*, when the people had leave to repose from the violence and anarchy of former years, and the parochial system of education became again general. They were, now after the quiet establishment of their Church, plied from Sabbath to Sabbath by an efficient and acceptable clergy, in consequence of which the transformation appears a most decisive one for proving the efficacy of moral causes. The extract we have already given from Fletcher, relates to the condition of Scotland in 1698. The following, from De Foe, gives an account of the same country for 1717 :

“ The people are restrained in the ordinary practice of common immoralities, such as swearing, drunkenness, slander, fornication, and the like. As to theft, murder, and other capital crimes, they come under the cognizance of the civil magistrate, as in other countries ; but in those things which the Church has power to punish, the people being constantly and impartially prosecuted, they are thereby the more restrained, kept sober and under government, and ycu may pass through twenty towns in Scotland, without seeing any broil, or hearing one oath sworn in the streets ; whereas, if a blind man was to come from there into England, he shall know the first town he sets his foot in within the English border, by hearing the name of God blasphemed and profanely used, even by the very little children on the street.”

It is from other sources that we know how the economical kept pace with the moral—how not only the disorder, but the extreme destitution rapidly disappeared—that mendicity, though it still subsisted, was carried on to a quiet and limited extent ; and above all, as can be indubitably authenticated by the parochial records kept from week to week in every parish in Scotland, that there were not six parishes in the whole country where they had recourse to a legal assessment, or compulsory provision for the maintenance of their poor. The only public charity then known throughout the great bulk of the nation, was that upheld by the free-will offerings from Sabbath to Sabbath at the church door—and these mainly contributed by the people themselves, or by the commonalty of each congregation, not far removed in their own circumstances, or rather pressing hard on the very borders of pauperism. And all this without any legal or economical expedient whatever, without a poor-rate, without any allotment system, or cottage system, or agrarian invasion upon property, or any infringement whatever on the proprietary feelings of the upper classes ; but due altogether to a change of habit and character, which, along with the coming up of a new generation, took place upon the families—a glorious result of educational and ecclesiastical influences alone—or, as we have said already, due singly and entirely to the operation of moral causes.

Nor should it be difficult to comprehend the process by which this result was arrived at, and which, with the revival or progress of Christianity, might be repeated with the same result at all times, and in all countries of the world. It is most assuredly not needed for its success that the people should have at all the consciousness of any such doctrine as that of Malthus, or that they should be required to put forth any calculation respecting it—so that the circulation of the proposed scientific tracts amongst them is wholly uncalled for, and would indeed be found a singularly and most ludicrously inoperative expedient. It is not the scholarship of Political Economy that is at all wanted; but the far more accessible yet infinitely higher scholarship of the Bible, brought home to the popular conscience through the medium of well taught schools, and well administered churches; and, let us add, well organized and well cultivated parishes. Such vast and unwieldy topics as the world and the world's population, need not for one moment be present to their thoughts. Each has but to do with the matters of his own little sphere,—whether it be the sphere of his own condition, within which it is his part to act wisely; or the sphere of his own duties, within which it is his part to act conscientiously. And the guarantee for his doing both is simply, that, under such a regimen as we have here prescribed for him, he becomes a better Christian and a better man. Doubtless he will have a farther reach of anticipation than before, such being the enlarging and elevating, as well as transforming effect of a religious education, combining as it does, both the education of letters, and the education of principle. Altogether he is a more reflective, and considerate, and sober-minded person than formerly, with a greater ascendancy of thought over passion, of the moral and the intellectual over the appetites and propensities of his merely animal nature. The mind in fact, when thus exercised and thus disciplined, experiences what may be termed a general elevation—shooting as it were a-head of the present, and capable now of looking onward with forecast and preparation, not only for the distant futurity on the other side of death, but for the nearer futurities of our earthly existence. It rises to higher tastes, and catches a refining influence from higher companionships; and, in virtue of the same self-command by which it is enabled to sacrifice present gratifications for the interest of the life that is to come, is it also enabled to make good its preference for the decencies and real comforts of the life that now is—and this by a sustained habit of frugality and good conduct, so as to provide aright for the sufficiency of the years which lie before it, meanwhile bidding away the incitements of unhallowed licentiousness, or reckless dissipation. It is because of this higher standard of enjoyment, after which a people thus trained and thus moralized are insensibly led



to aspire, that later marriages prevail, and these preceded by a larger of course, yet not by a licentious but by a pure and moral celibacy. It is unnecessary to insist on the very obvious consideration, that when marriages are thus postponed, and so are less productive than formerly, the views and objects of the Malthusians are made to receive their practical fulfilment—and this among a people who are utterly unconscious of Malthus, and of all his speculations. The physiological law of increase by which the population, whether of the whole earth or any of its sections, tends to outrun the agricultural produce, is in this way counteracted by influences altogether on the side of happiness and virtue—and yet, it may be, throughout a community in total ignorance of the law. The individuals who compose it may be looking no farther than each after his own immortal and his own temporal well-being; and on whom therefore this sure promise of Scripture obtains its glorious verification, that if we seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, all other things will be added unto us.

There are many topics which here crowd in upon us, and which we should like much to dwell upon at length, with the view of clearing away every exception, and of establishing as fully and conclusively as might be desired, every sound and important principle which belongs to this great question. But we should thus expand the present article into a volume; and we must therefore now do little more than state what we have no room to argue or to illustrate, and this as compendiously and briefly as we can.

First then, let us not be surprised, that while man seeks after one object, and by his efforts succeeds in obtaining it—such is the constitution of things, that by these very efforts another and wholly distinct object is secured, of which he may be altogether unseeing, and which therefore he does not seek after. This is altogether of a piece with the order of nature, and with the economy of God's providential administration in the world. For instance, when man eats, it is generally without respect to the use of food for the continuance of life and strength, but simply for the gratification of his hunger—an appetite which the author of his frame, as if aware that he could not be trusted with the care of his own preservation, instead of leaving this great interest to any foresight or calculation of his, has inserted in the shape of a strong and urgent physical affection, which, recurring at brief periodic intervals, and acting the part both of a monitor and master, both reminds and impels him to those repeated acts, the performance of which is indispensable to the well-being of his animal economy. Political Economy is full of such examples—insomuch, that a Natural Theology, of which Archbishop Whately has given some specimens, might be

founded on the phenomena, and the laws which this science places before us. Thus it has been found that the maximum of a nation's commercial prosperity is best realized by each individual being left to the busy and sharp-sighted, though, in reference to the general result, short-sighted prosecution of his own interests—so that, while his single view is the advancement of his own fortune, he, without any express design on his part, along with thousands of others who are similarly situated, contributes each his share towards the best economic condition of the country in which he lives. The Legislature, however, on the presumption of their own larger views, and, as if themselves not so short-sighted as individual traders, have, by their restraints and their bounties and their artificial regulations, tried to mend and to medicate what they have only marred by their interference, doing mischief, in fact, by the disturbance they have given to the operations of a previous and better mechanism, which it had been their enlightened policy to let alone. And so in the philosophy of Free-trade, the essence of which consists in leaving this mechanism to its own spontaneous evolutions, do we behold a striking testimony to the superior intelligence of Him who is the author both of human nature and human society—an impressive demonstration of how much the wisdom of man is outpeered by the wisdom of God. Now, it is precisely thus too in the matter of population, regarding which the best and most wholesome state of a country is arrived at, not by the encouragements or prohibitions of the government, and almost as little by the lessons of Political Economy, but by a sound popular education, which, if blended, as it ever ought to be, or rather, if based upon religion, will infallibly raise the taste and the habit of families, so that, by a way which they comprehend not—nor is it at all necessary that they should—these sayings of the Bible will come to have their fulfilment, and in nothing more than in the general sufficiency of the working-classes, even that righteousness exalteth a nation, and that sin is the reproach and the ruin of a people.

But, secondly—while it thus holds true, that to keep any country right in the matter of population, it is in no way required that all the people in it shall become economic philosophers, for it were enough if each were provided with an education which did sufficient justice to him as a moral and intellectual and accountable being, and he were then simply left to the management of his own affairs in the way he deemed best for his own comfort and his own credit—Yet we join not in the cry of, Leave population to itself, God will provide for all whom He brings into the world, and therefore let us feel absolved from all care and all calculation on the subject of marriages. On the con-

trary, we hold it no more safe and right for man to proceed recklessly in this than in any other department of his affairs ; nor can we understand why all wisdom and deliberation and forethought, so laudable in every thing else, should have no place in this the most important step in the history of human life. Man, in fact, should be reckless in nothing, but reckless in every thing ; and the only question is, what, in the concern of marriage is it, that he should reck or reckon upon ? Not, as some economists would most grotesquely have him to do, not on the world's or on the country's population, but solely on his own means and his own circumstances, so that he may decide aright on what is best and wisest for himself. Let us but have a well-trained commonalty ; and in their hands such a decision will, on the whole, be safe, so that all our apprehensions on the subject of an excessive population might then go to sleep. A good result particular in each case, would infallibly land us in a good result universal. Doubtless the ever-watchful Providence of God will ever be present, and ever have the rule in human affairs ; and be characterized throughout by the principles of a wise and righteous administration. Imprudence will be followed up, as it always is, by suffering. Prudence and virtue will verily have their rewards. And marriage forms no exception to this rule or method of the divine government in the world. Observation, we are sure, does not tell us so. Let marriages be generally improvident ; and if we are not surprised on finding, that in each individual case destitution or disease is the consequence, why should we be startled or surprised when told that an aggregate of such cases must land us in a wretched and degraded population ? Or let marriages be generally provident, and if there be nothing inexplicable in the connexion between such an outset for a household and the subsequent comfort and prosperity which prevail in it—why should it be deemed a monstrous or a paradoxical doctrine, when the connexion is affirmed between the habit of provident marriages in any land, and the cheering spectacle of its thriving and well-conditioned families ?

But, thirdly, let it not be imagined that to insure such a result, a wholesale interdict must be laid upon marriages. This is a subject on which our author, with all the temerity that is usual among the confident, while half-informed, breaks out into one of his most violent exaggerations :—

“ The *preventive check*, as prescribed by Malthus, would absolutely exclude from marriage the bulk of our working-classes. And what then (have these theorists ever asked themselves the question ?) would be the state of a country, in which the bulk of the young men and young women of the working-classes were taught as a first principle, that they were not to marry ? Should we not quickly have awful

proofs that the 'forbidding to marry' was indeed a 'doctrine of devils?' These assertions and propositions, too, if we could for a moment credit them, must drive us to inevitable despair; for what can be plainer than that they postpone all hope of relief from our *present* perils and sufferings for nearly a whole generation? Even could we believe that the poor had overstocked the labour-market by their improvident marriages, and could we, by force or perseverance, stop all such marriages for the future, that prevention would not take one single hand out of the labour-market *now*, nor would it affect the new supplies for many years to come."—REMARKS, pp. 181-2.

It were endless to expose all the misconceptions which even these few sentences invoke, and what a lengthened then and wearisome undertaking it were to go point by point over the whole volume. In the first place, it is not the way to go about it, that the people should be taught not to marry. All our demand is, that well taught in the lessons of rightly served churches, and in the learning of elementary and rightly conducted schools, they should, when thus humanized by education, and by the refining intercourse of those who feel a Christian concern both in their religious and economic well-being—they should be left, which they might then be with all safety, to their own tastes, and their own sense both of duty and of decency. And what extravagance to be told of all being forbidden to marry, and of our having to wait ere the country is righted for a whole generation. Would our author only submit for once to be instructed by Political Economy, so far as to take in but one of its lessons, this at least, of the many other bugbears which haunt him, would be effectually dissipated. It would quiet his alarm, we think, if he knew what the articles were, on which the least variation in their quantity effected the greatest variation in their price, and that human labour is pre-eminently one of these articles. And just as a very slight overplus in the supply of labour causes a very great reduction in its wages, so would the reverse operation of a very slight relief in its amount obtain for it its full and fair remuneration. Or, in other words, to maintain a right proportion between the two elements of demand and supply, a very slight postponement in the average date of marriage might be all that is necessary—such a postponement, we feel confident, as would take place spontaneously and unbidden in every population which had moral and educational justice done to them. It is thus that without shutting our eyes, or getting into a passion, against the great physiological law of the potential increase of the human family, we can look without dismay, or rather with bright and cheering hopes, to their future amelioration—and this because we believe that their actual increase, when placed under the re-

gulation of wisdom and virtue, will never be such as to land us in the misery of an oppressed and straitened condition. And here we must confess ourselves unable to comprehend the sensitive, or it may be perhaps the theological antipathy of our author and others, to the affirmation that the comfort and independence of the working-classes are in their own hands. It is a conviction which yields the greatest triumph and satisfaction to ourselves, and we think should do the same to every mind of genuine philanthropy—that, amid the tried inefficacy of all merely political or economical expedients for the elevation and sufficiency of their state, there is a highway still open to us which has scarcely yet been tried or entered upon, and that is through the medium of our people's intelligence and our people's worth. This result, however, is never to be arrived at by a self-originated or self-sustained movement on their part; but, as we have long and earnestly contended for, by an aggressive operation on the part of those who ought to be the dispensers of knowledge and goodness throughout the commonwealth, and chiefly among the heretofore sadly neglected commonalty of our nation.\*

Again—and here we come into conflict with another of our author's glaring misconceptions—while we thus anticipate a great moral and economical reform from a general Christian education on our part, it is not because we count on all, or on a majority, or even on any great proportion of the people being thereby converted into truly spiritual men. Heaven speed onward such a consummation, mightily to be striven and mightily to be prayed for, when grace from on high shall descend in a universal shower upon our world, so that nations will be born in a day! Meanwhile, it is a deeply mysterious and most melancholy and affecting contemplation, that even in our most religious schools, and in the congregations and parishes of our most devoted ministers, after years of anxious, and earnest, and unremitting labour, there should yet appear so small an amount of fruit for eternity—inso-much that the number of genuine and vital Christians, Christians in the full sense and significancy of the term, even in those places where the most vigorous and efficient Christianizing processes are going on, the number of these has still to be counted but in minorities and fractions, or merest handfuls of the whole population. Verily, the way to everlasting life seems as narrow

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\* Since we commenced our preparation of this article, we observe that the *Dublin University Magazine* re-echoes this strange outcry against the affirmation that the people have their own comfort in their own hands, whether on the score of its fancied inhumanity, as if it implied the abandonment of the people to themselves, or of its fancied impiety, as if it implied their independence on the blessing and the government of God, we are not able to say.

as ever, and as few who find it. But let not the truth in one department of thought or reasoning, be so extended or misapplied as to distort or in any way obscure (which it manifestly has done to the optics of our author and of many others,) the truth in another and different department. "Ye are the salt of the earth," says our Saviour; but let us not forget that the salt bears a small proportion to the mass of that which is salted. Or, to come sooner at our conclusion, let us avail ourselves of a striking and most important observation by Wilberforce, on the reflex and secondary influence of Christian example, in virtue of which, for every one man whom the Gospel spiritualizes, it might, throughout the circle of his acquaintanceship, and as a consequence of the respect and admiration which are felt for his character, have the effect of civilizing, nay, of moralizing fifty more. And hence, what all history and all observation do attest, the undoubted fact that the Christian religion has elevated the general standard of manners in every country that has embraced it—inasmuch that its humanizing efficacy on the commonwealth at large, spreads far and wide beyond its converting efficacy on those whom it regenerates, into a meetness for the inheritance of the saints. Were this observation thoroughly pondered, it might serve to reduce somewhat the incredulity both of religious and secular men—grounded on the imagination that we must wait for a universal Christianity, ere we can realize the universally good effect of Christian institutions, on the economic well-being of a nation. There is scarcely a plebeian Sabbath-school which does not evince the contrary—where a most visible improvement almost uniformly takes place in the dress, and docility, and general decency of the children, for months, it may be for years, before a single conversion has taken place amongst them. And it is thus, too, on the larger scale of a country. The observances, the decencies, the conventional proprieties of every Christian land are such, that where the lessons of the Gospel are brought within the reach of all, all will to a great extent be humanized by them. Christians, no doubt, are a very peculiar people, and still few in number—yet the influence of these few upon the many, would infallibly tell in begetting a higher style and standard among the families. It is in the oversight of this that our author penned the following sentence—where he is wrong, but not so outrageously wrong as he often is, because here only chargeable with a misapprehension which one often meets with, and which perhaps is a very natural one—"Not one-fourth," he tells us, "or even one-tenth can be supposed to live under the constraining influence of Christian principle." This we fear to be a mournful truth—yet could we only secure

such a proportion of thoroughly good men throughout the mass of our population, and in every little section of it, we should not despair of such an effect on their general and present well-being, as would nobly accredit the mighty influence which belongs to Christianity over the affairs and interests of the world.

But further, we are not to imagine that under the regimen which we advocate, the progress of the world's population will ever come to be arrested, so long as the yet progressive agriculture continues to yield its increasing supplies to the world's food. Should the means of subsistence be doubled in any country, as that of Britain has been within the last 40 years, and as some of the American provinces has been in 15 years—then with the same standard of enjoyment as before, there is a moral certainty that the population will be doubled also. Nor does any genuine and enlightened Malthusian quarrel with such a process, or look, as he has often been represented to do, with an evil eye upon it. It is not so much for a small, as opposed to a large population, that he contends for. It is for a well-conditioned and prosperous, as opposed to a starving, mistriven, and wretched population. The only difference between him and his opponents is, that he does not want the population to outrun the food—while he is very certain that no speculation will, and no speculation ought, prevent its following hard and close upon the rear of it. And so far from lamenting this, provided only that there be enough for sustaining in decent and happy comfort our increasing families, he rejoices in it both as the symptom of a present, and the cause of a future and still larger prosperity. And he deprecates, and with as great sincerity as any of his antagonists, the calamities which serve to impede this progress—the wars, the diseases, and, above all, the misgovernment and oppression under which industry is suspended, because the fruits of industry are ever liable to be wrested from the hands of their proprietor. Such was the state of Israel when the people had to hide themselves in caves for fear of the Philistines, and the decay both of population and food must have been the unfailing consequence—such a want, in fact, of both, as proved for a time to be the destruction of their nationality. There is no economist in the world who would not desiderate the reversal of such a state, that the sustenance of the country, and its attendant population, might be again restored to them—none that we know of who would not, in the contemplation of it, join most cordially in the recorded sentiment of the man of wisdom, that in the multitude of people is the king's honour, but in the want of people is the destruction of the prince. We mention these things that we may allay, if possible, the heats of a controversy, which has been greatly exasperated by the misconceptions that prevail, and bring the parties who are engaged

in it to a better understanding with each other. We do hope that all these imputations, sometimes fierce and sometimes foolish, will at length be desisted from. We are even hopeful that the authors of these hard speeches may come, on reflection, to be somewhat ashamed of them; and more especially that a certain relenting sense of their own precipitation will come over the spirits, both of the yet unknown sentimentalist who has penned this volume, and of his unnamed sea-captain, who, on the perusal of another volume, which, it so happened, was very distasteful to him, gave way to his hearty and honest, though, like the element in which he moves, his somewhat boisterous indignation.

Once more would we put it to our opponents. We fully concede to them the egregious absurdity of indoctrinating our people in the philosophy of Malthus, that they might learn to bear in their minds a prospective reference to the world's increasing population, and so as to found thereupon the universal lesson that they should marry late. But, on the other hand, the absurdity is in every way as egregious, of teaching them a prospective reference to the world's increasing agriculture, and this with the view of founding thereupon a universal license to marry early. There is grotesque pedantry either way, and equally so on both sides. Yet pedantry as it is, it has been alike exemplified by each of the parties. In perfect counterpart to the proposed tracts of the economists on the capabilities of the species, are the speculations of their antagonists on the capabilities of the soil, whether in writings or speeches—as at a late cattle-show dinner, where the newly-discovered properties of guano were descanted upon; and the inmates of our St. Giles', and Cowgates, and Old Vennels, and of every lane and alley in the empire, were in effect told, that now they might, in the question of marriage, abandon themselves on the strength of the said guano, without restraint, and without fear, to an unbounded recklessness. We rejoice in the assurance that neither the world at large, nor even our own highly cultivated Britain, has yet nearly reached the extreme limit of their productiveness; and that from year to year we may have successive additions to the supply of human food for centuries to come. Let this tell as it may in keeping down prices; and so as, in virtue of a general cheapness and plenty, to translate all the greater number of our people into a condition for marrying earlier than they would otherwise have done. There is not a patriotic, and at the same time truly intelligent Malthusian, who would not look with complacency and delight on both these augmentations, we mean both of food and of people. And to obtain this result, our only desideratum is, that the people themselves should be enlightened, not on the aggregate interests of a country or a nation, but each on the subject of his own character and his own



comfort—and thus, instead of meddling with matters too high for them, they would be led to walk in the way of duteousness and true wisdom, so as each to manage aright the affairs of his own little home.\*

We regret that so much space should have been required for these various rectifications, and a great deal more would have been necessary to discharge this volume of all the errors and misconceptions which abound in it. It is most unfortunate that the author should have meddled with Political Economy at all, in which, to speak plainly, he is not an adept, but a mere dabbler. By adventuring himself upon a science which he does not understand, he will only excite the wonder of those who are enlightened in the science, that one so puerile in his acquisitions, should be so dictatorial in the various sentences which are given forth by him. For ourselves, the reverence we have for his main lesson, the paramount necessity of a Christian education for the people, survives all his perversities and all his provocations. But few yet we fear are the political economists who have much value for Christianity, at least as an element to be admitted into any lessons or speculations of theirs; and thus the redeeming influence of what is good in this volume, will not countervail in their estimation the effect of its numerous and palpable absurdities. It is on this account, we apprehend, that, however popularly the author has written, and however impressive his appeals to the religious sensibilities of his hearers, he has most unnecessarily armed against even what is right in his views, much of the higher reason and intelligence of the country. It is greatly to be deplored that so much of religion should come before us associated with so much, we grieve to say it, of ignorance and imbecility; and grieve all the more, because could we have been permitted to look at the Christianity of this volume *minus* its Political Economy, we should have pronounced it to be excellent. Could but all its folly and all its feculence be blown away, it would be found that there was a pure farina behind, worthy of all acceptance. In our distaste for the manifold crudities of this performance, all the more distasteful that it is accompanied by so much of conceit and arrogance, let us not overlook the wholesome principle by which it is generally pervaded. Let us regard him therefore with all possible benignity—and receive him as we would a weak brother, but not to doubtful disputations.

We should not have deemed it worth while to have made so full an exposure of a work so hasty and superficial, had it not

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\* Psalms cxxxi. l. ci. 2.

been for a great practical mischief that might follow on the dissemination of its views. We most cordially agree with its author in thinking, that nothing short of a general religious education will prove an effectual remedy for the evils of our social state. But then ere he would apply this great and only specific, he insists on certain conditions which he holds to be indispensable for the success of its operation. His own economical reforms must be adopted in the first instance. The consent of Parliament must be had to what both in principle and effect were tantamount to an agrarian law. The possessory and proprietary rights of landlords must be invaded by an act of the Senate—lest by that most fearful act of a nation, a revolution with all its horrors, these rights will be found to give way before a sweeping and irresistible tide of popular violence. In other words, he would suspend the application even of his own principal remedy, and which by itself and single-handed, were of sovereign efficacy in our estimation—even this, the Christian instruction of the people, he would hold in abeyance, till his at best doubtful, and it may be impracticable expedients of legal and economical reform shall have passed through the weary ordeal, both of a yet unprepared public, and a yet unwilling Parliament. It is thus that while he denounces the Political Economy of all other men, he conjures up a Political Economy of his own, and would therewith obstruct the entry of that work, which we are for laying a confident and immediate hand upon. But the greatest curiosity of all is, that the system which pronounces on the utter impotency of all that a mere Political Economy can devise or do in this matter, and which contends for the religion and sound morals of the people, as being all in all—this is the very system which he singles out for his fiercest invectives, and whereupon he founds his charges of irreligion and infidelity against every other Political Economy than that which he himself has chosen to patronize. Now, such is our faith in the virtue of a Christian education, and of it alone, that not only do we think might all other, but even might his Political Economy be dispensed with. Will he only take his lesson from the Methodists of England? Did they require the adoption of his preliminary economics, ere they set forth upon that work of which they have acquitted themselves so gloriously? With no other preparation than the Gospel of Jesus Christ, have they made entry upon mines and workshops, and caused their voice to be heard in the cities and throughout the villages; and wherever they have gone, do we witness the power of their ministrations—not only in their devout and crowded congregations, but in the decency and comfort of the many thousand families which have been reclaimed by them. Were the Church of England but universally actuated by the spirit of Methodism—

did she labour with the same devotedness for the good of human souls, carrying down her services to the great bulk and body of the common people—it is our belief, that, on the event of such a blessed revival as this, the nation might be saved; and we shall be glad if this expression of our homage to the power of that great ecclesiastical institute, will serve in some measure as a peace-offering to the zealous Episcopalian who has penned the volume now before us. But we confess our fears when we observe how lightly he touches on the abuses of her patronage; and how fondly he calculates on the charm, which, whatever the corruption or the indolence may be, he would ascribe to the mere reading of her excellent liturgy. We are sadly apprehensive that if we have nothing else to trust in but the feeble arrests of such a Political Economy as is expounded in this work, and such a meagre and formal ministry as too often prevails throughout the majority of our Established Churches—then nothing will avert the catastrophe to which our author tells us, and with too much probability, that our country is fast hastening.

The following extract will serve to justify our observations on this work, as exhibiting a strange medley of ignorance (we should far rather say ignorance than injustice,) with sound principle:—

“The moment the least attempt was made to do anything for either the souls or bodies of the millions, that moment it was discovered that the interference of the Legislature was ‘contrary to sound principles.’ The constant reply to all propositions of this latter kind was ‘*Laissez faire.*’ Whether protection from foreign competition were required, or protection from native cupidity—the answer always was, *Laissez faire.* If the wants of the poor were spoken of, we were assured that the safest and best plan was ‘to teach them to rely on their own resources.’ If we talked of the pressure on the market of labour, arising from the constant and rapid improvement and increase of machinery, the answer of Dr. Chalmers was, that ‘the working-classes have their comfort and independence in their own hands; for they have entire and absolute command over the supply of labour.’ Thus all propositions relative to the bodily wants of the poor were met. And when their souls were adverted to, the difficulties thrown in the way were doubled. Education was talked of indeed; but then it must be a ‘non-sectarian education,’ i. e. an education which had to do with the head only, and never meddled with the heart. As to Church-Extension, or any proposition for giving the Gospel to the many millions who, in this nominally Christian country, were practically excluded from the sound of it—every idea of the kind was scouted with vehemence by most of the leading philosophers of the day. Thus the poet’s sentiment was utterly trampled under foot, and man himself, and the soul of man, were the only thing with which it was held that the government had nothing to do.”

There is a sad want both of temper and intelligence in this extract. Political economists can be named, though our author has ludicrously failed in his attempt to name them rightly, who have fallen into some of the errors which are here anathematized. But Political Economy is not responsible for all that political economists have written; and accordingly, as in every other progressive science, it has principles of its own, by which to rectify the false conclusions into which any of its disciples may have strayed. It is thus, for example, that on grounds which we at least deem satisfactory, the aphorism of "*Laissez faire*" has been greatly modified of late; and the line of demarcation drawn between those interests to which it is, and those to which it is not applicable. In particular it has been shewn, that while for all the articles of ordinary merchandize, the supply might be left to the spontaneous operations of Free-trade, the higher concerns of education, whether religious or scientific or elementary, cannot with safety or advantage be thus left; and that so far from Government having nothing to do with these, it has a most important duty to perform, not only in providing for these, but in acting as the guardian both of public health and public morals. And in regard to Church-Extension, we are not sure but that the demonstrations of Political Economy have had some effect, in removing certain prejudices which stood in the way of this sacred undertaking. It is true that one Government has discountenanced this object; and that another, worse than discountenanced, has positively vitiated the cause. If ever they shall come to take it up rightly, let us hope that it will be on such calm and comprehensive and enlightened views as are worthy of a great legislature, at length convinced that the Christianity of the people is the sovereign cure for all our social and all our political disorders—and not in deference either to the bigotry or the bawling outcries of men, whose raw and ill-digested notions make it palpable to all, that they have undertaken a task greatly above their strength, that they are indeed meddling with matters too high for them.

In regard to our affirmation that the people have their comfort and independence in their own hands—we have already said, that however true, it were a most preposterous attempt to make this good by any direct schooling of our artizans and labourers on the subject of population—a lesson the full effect and benefit of which (besides its being wholly inoperative in this form,) could not be fully realized till the days of their posterity. We should not expect that they will fetch their inducements from a consideration so distant; but there is another lesson which would tell visibly and immediately upon their interests, and which they might proceed to act upon in a single day—and that is the lesson of economy. We are aware of a feeling on the part of many, as if

this is impracticable, because of that general destitution which our violent exaggerators delight in representing as extreme and overwhelming. There cannot be a greater or a more misleading delusion; and to dissipate which nothing more is necessary, than a minute and statistical acquaintance with the habits and condition of the families in any plebeian district—say of 2000 people—let the aspect of want and wretchedness be what it may. We rejoice in the soundness of our author's views, both as against centralization, and in favour of separate managements upon distinct and small territories, in which, though he has been fully and largely anticipated by the very men whom he most abuses, they, we are sure, will not be less thankful for the advocacy of what is good from whichever quarter it comes, seeing that such subdivision is not only best for the training of our people in Christianity, but also for the training of them in sound economics—the one by means of local churches and schools, the other by means of local savings'-banks. Could we only teach our working-classes the way to these latter institutes, it would operate for their amelioration in precisely the same manner and with the same effect, as did the *plenishings* and *providings* of other days; and from which they would soon learn that they can help themselves far more effectually than they ever will, or indeed ever can be helped by the liberality of others, or by the allowances of a poor-rate. We cannot repeat the demonstration here which has been given elsewhere, of the effect that such a general habit of accumulation would have on the rate of wages, or with how much greater advantage workmen could treat with their employers if each, in possession of his own little capital, was placed above the urgent or immediate necessity of surrendering to their terms. In this way they might exert a control over the labour-market, which would give them a place and a standing in the commonwealth they have never yet had. To speak in a language now beginning to be fashionable, they would attain to the importance and dignity of a fourth estate in the body politic. We long for such a consummation, when, not by radicalism, but in a way more excellent, the inscription on one of the banners of a recent radical procession will in time be realized—of High wages and no poor-law. Let not Mr. Sheriff Alison tell us, that this is Utopian, or say that the commonalty of Glasgow are undone unless there be the forthcoming of a poor-rate to the extent of eighty thousand a-year; when, in the same breath, he could tell us of the same commonalty, that they spend twelve hundred thousand a-year in whisky—a most pregnant instance truly, that, with temperance and good conduct, they do have their comfort and independence in their own hands. It is to us a most cheering reflection, that the materials and means of restoration to a

sound economic state are to be found with the people themselves, and all that is required is the moral ascendancy and guidance that will give a right direction to them.

We are aware that our Scottish examples and Scottish experience have been very much thrown away upon our neighbours in the south; yet we cannot help thinking that the following statement of ten years back, by a thoroughly practical philanthropist, and himself a man of business, would tell on the European, if not on the English mind, and be sustained as a document fraught with interest and instruction all the world over. It relates to one of our most important towns:

"Paisley is perhaps the most plebeian town of its size in Europe, its population being composed chiefly of weavers, with such accompanying trades and occupations as are dependent upon, or necessary for the supply of weavers and weaving apparatus. From its proximity to Glasgow, Paisley can boast of few extensive manufacturers, many of its operatives being employed by Glasgow houses through the medium of resident agents; and, having few home or foreign merchants of any note, it presents the extraordinary feature of almost an entire working population. As some important practical results, both of a moral and political nature, may be drawn from a review of its past and present history, it is our intention, in the present article, to take a cursory view of the *weaving*—in other words, the general population of that town from about the year 1775 or 1780 to the present day, contrasting its moral and intellectual character at two or three distinct periods, and endeavouring to account for the sad declension in public manners which of late has been so obvious to the country at large.

"To state the simple fact, that the *once* quiet, sober, moral, and intelligent inhabitants of Paisley, are now generally a turbulent, immoral, and half-educated population, is to state what almost every one knows, what many mourn over, but for which few seem able to propose any remedy.

"It is indeed a melancholy subject for contemplation, that what was at first eagerly embraced by many as an addition to their family receipts, has ultimately proved, not only a chief cause of individual poverty, but of family feuds—insubordination on the part of children, and, as a natural consequence, a general moral degradation over the whole community. We allude to the practice, introduced about the year 1800, (when the manufacture of Indian imitation shawls was first commenced,) of employing children as draw-boys from the early age of five or six to ten or eleven years—a period of life, till then, uniformly spent in school, or in youthful amusements, but subsequently, from a rapid increase in this branch, all the available children are employed in the weaving-shop.

"From about 1770 to 1800 the manufacture of silk gauzes and fine lawns flourished in Paisley, as also, during a portion of this period alluded to, that of figured-loom and hand-tamboured muslin. These

branches afforded to all classes excellent wages ; and being articles of fancy, room was afforded for a display of taste, as well as enterprise and intelligence, for which the Paisley weavers were justly conspicuous. Sobriety and frugality being their general character, good wages enabled almost every weaver to possess himself of a small capital, which, joined with their general intelligence and industry, enabled and induced many to spend days and even weeks together in plodding over a new design, assisted frequently by his obliging neighbours, knowing that the first half-dozen weavers who succeeded in some new style of work were sure to be recompensed tenfold.

"Nearly one half of Paisley, at that period, was built by weavers from savings off their ordinary wages. Every house had its garden ; and every weaver, being his own master, could work it when he pleased. Many were excellent florists, many possessed a tolerable library, and *all* were politicians, so that about the period of the French Revolution, Mr. Pitt expressed more fear of the unrestricted political discussions of the Paisley weavers, than of 10,000 armed men. Had Paisley been then what Paisley is now, crowded with half-informed radicals and infidels, his fears would have been justified ; but truth and honest dealing could fear nothing from a community constituted as Paisley then was ; and never, perhaps, in the history of the world, was there a more convincing proof of the folly of being afraid of a universal and thorough education, especially when impregnated with the religion of the Bible, than in the state of Paisley at that period.

"At the period alluded to, every man, woman, and child above eight or nine years of age, could read the Bible ; many could write and cast accounts ; and not a few of the weavers' sons went through a regular course at the grammar school. To have had a distant relative unable to read, or one sent to prison, would have been felt as equally disgraceful.

"The inhabitants were so universally regular in their attendance upon church, and strict afterwards in keeping in-doors, that it is recollected, at the end of the last century, or commencement of the present, that not a living creature, save two or three *privileged blackguards*, were ever seen walking the streets after divine service ; or if any chanced to appear, an errand for the doctor was supposed to be the probable cause. Family duties were generally attended to ; and prayer and praise were not confined to the Sabbath evening ; for on week days as well as on Sabbath days, the ears of the by-standers were regaled with songs of praise issuing forth from almost every dwelling ; and, in those days it was no uncommon thing to find the highly respectable weaver a most consistent and truly useful elder of the Church.

"At that period, the honest quiet *Whig* or *Tory* weaver might be seen with his wife, at four or five o'clock, sallying forth on an evening walk, in full Sabbath attire ; the husband in advance of his wife, carrying the youngest child in his arms, and his wife following, with two, three, or four older children ; and perchance, ere their return, a brother and sister-in-law were honoured with a visit to a cup of tea, to which they experienced a hearty welcome. Nor were little luxuries on such

occasions altogether unknown; a weaver then being able to afford them.

“ Although early marriages were very common, yet the frequent attendant evils were not immediately felt; a lad of eighteen or twenty being quite as able to support a family as his father at forty; and he did not anticipate those days of darkness and privation which have since come on Paisley.

“ We come now to the mournful cause of the present degraded state of that once moral and happy town; not that we imagine that the fluctuations of trade, arising from the change from a war to a peace system, have not affected that town in common with others; but these fluctuations would have passed over it with comparatively little injury, but for the operative cause we are about to mention, which wrought its sure though silent influence upon the manners, habits, and morals of the general population.

“ The introduction of the manufactory of imitation India shawls, about the year 1800, required that each weaver should employ one, two, or three boys, called draw-boys. Eleven to twelve was the usual age, previous to this period, for sending boys to the loom; but as boys of any age above five were equal to this work of drawing, those of ten years were first employed, then, as the demand increased, those of nine, eight, seven, six, and even five. Girls too, were by and by introduced into the same employment, and at equally tender years. Many a struggle the honest and intelligent weaver must have had, between his duty to his children, and his immediate interests. The idea of his children growing up without *schooling*, must have cost him many a pang; but the idea of losing 2s. 6d. or 3s. per week, and paying school wages beside, proved too great a bribe even for parental affection, and, as might have been expected, *mammon* in the end prevailed, and the practice gradually became too common and familiar to excite more than a passing regret. Children grew up without either the education or the training which the youth of the country derive from the school-master; and every year, since 1805, has sent forth its hundreds of unschooled and untrained boys and girls; now become the parents of a still ruder, more undisciplined, and ignorant offspring. Nor was this all. So great was the demand for draw-boys, that ever and anon the town-crier went through the streets, offering not simply 2s. 6d., 3s., or 3s. 6d. a week for the labour of boys and girls, but bed, board, and washing, and a penny to themselves on Saturday night. This was a reward on disobedience to parents—family insubordination, with all its train of evils, followed. The son, instead of standing in awe of his father, began to think himself a man, when he was only a brawling impudent boy. On the first or second quarrel with his father, he felt he might abandon the parental roof, for the less irksome employment of the stranger. The first principle of all subordination was thus broken up, and the boy who refused to hearken to the voice of his father or his mother, and to honour them, could not be expected, when he became a man, to fear God, or to honour the king. If ignorance be the mother of superstitious devotion, it is also the mother of stupid and vulgar



contempt : An intelligent and moral people will ever be most ready to give honour where it is due, and, respecting themselves, will yield a willing respect to intelligence, virtue, rank, and lawful authority, wherever it is placed.

" This increase of the family receipts, arising from the employment of one or more children as draw-boys, ceased on the first slackness in the demand ; for it is evident that the additional sum we shall suppose of 5s. a week, drawn by the labour of the weaver's children, enabled him to work just at so much lower prices to any manufacturer who might choose to speculate in making goods at the reduced price, in the hope of a future demand. A short period of idleness on the part of the weaver would have given him time for the overstock of goods to clear off, whereas this practice of working even extra hours during the period of a glut, tended to perpetuate the glut, or to render fluctuations arising from this source more frequent, and, along with other causes, to perpetuate low wages. Thus was the employment of their children from five to ten, by the weavers of Paisley, at first an apparent advantage, but in the end a curse ; demonstrating that whatever may appear to be the interest of parents this year or next year, it is permanently the interest of them and their offspring to refuse every advantage in their temporal concerns, which tends to deprive youth of the first of parental blessings, Education, and that Providence has bound, in indissoluble alliance, the intelligence, the virtue, and the temporal well-being of society. In 1818-19, during the Radical period, there were found full three thousand, Paisley-born and Paisley-bred, who could not read ; and the decline of intelligence has been followed by the decline of that temperance, prudence, and economy, which are the cardinal virtues of the working-classes, by which alone they can elevate their condition, or preserve themselves from sinking into the most abject poverty.

" The Paisley weaver of forty years ago married early, because he foresaw that he could, in decency, support a family, and even save something for sickness, or age, or the fluctuations of his trade. The Paisley weaver lad, in 1832, marries equally early, on a pittance that scarcely supports himself ; because he has neither the judgment to reflect on the misery which he is entailing on himself and others, nor moral principle to feel the solemn obligations of the state into which he is entering. Had the population of this town continued a well-educated, religious population, and, as wages diminished, intelligence and virtue had increased, the fall of wages would have been arrested by the natural operation of that prudence, which leads mankind to consult their duty as well as their inclinations ; and, without any knowledge of the principles of Malthus, the operative classes would, like the upper and middle classes, have acted on his principles. It was the practice of the old Paisley weaver, after the attachment was formed, and an engagement entered into, to interpose sometimes a delay of years in the labour of collecting their *providing* or *plenishing* ; that is, a most enormous mass of bed and table linen, an eight-day clock, &c. &c. ; and it was a point of distinction on the day previous to marriage, by one or other of the

parties, to exhibit to all the neighbours this accumulation of industry and economy. Will the clergy of Paisley inform us, how many marriages they now celebrate annually, where the parties have such *plenishing* to exhibit, with honest satisfaction to their neighbours? Or rather, how many enter into the state of wedlock, without one thought of the future, and who know not, nor care not, what they do?

“Those who have no consideration concerning the things of this life, are not likely to have any forethought regarding the life to come; and just in proportion as the modern Paisley weaver is without religion, does he despise it. All clergy are necessarily hypocrites, as all kings and magistrates, in their estimation, tyrants. Unitarianism, infidelity, or reckless profanity, too generally abound; and the popular cry is against all church establishments, however much demanded by the poverty and irreligion of our own town; and against all distinctions of ranks. Thus, measuring themselves by themselves, they would reduce society to their own level. Paisley thus furnishes an affecting illustration of the declaration of Holy Writ, ‘That righteousness exalteth a city; but sin is the ruin of any people.’”

We leave this precious extract to make its own impression upon the reader, and would only take occasion from it to rectify one misconception more of our author's—the last which we shall have to do with. But for this we must recur to his former volume on the “Perils of the Nation,” where he glaringly misinterprets what is meant by a high standard of enjoyment, and after conjuring up his own fancy for our understanding of it, denounces it with all his might, and in his own usual style of misplaced indignation. It seems that Mr. Perronet Thomson, in one of those quaint illustrations, by which, though in the guise of humour, he often brings out into bold relief the truth or principle for which he is contending, singles out but one ingredient of this standard, when, comparing the English with the Irish peasant, he tells that the one feeds upon beef, and the other on potatoes. Our author upon this imagines that the sole aim of the economists is to teach the common people how they should marry late in order that they may eat all the more luxuriously; and then draws a most revolting picture of gluttony and sensuality, and even criminal licentiousness—holding these up as the genuine products of our wild and reckless speculation. We know not if it was the circumstance of Mr. Thomson being an Englishman, which led him to fasten on their eating of beef, as being the proper type and specimen of that amelioration which still awaits the common people—or whether it is the same circumstance, which has given to our author the idea that this, and no other, is the high privilege which we are seeking to make good for the working-classes of our land. Perhaps a perusal of the above affecting narrative may tend somewhat to enlarge the conceptions of both; and lead them to perceive how much of all that either patriot or Christian phi-

lanthropist can desire for the fellows of his own species, is included in that higher standard of enjoyment which he longs to realize for them. He who succeeds in reaching this standard would probably feed more generously than before; but apart from this, there are other and better manifestations which would far more decisively mark the ascent that he had gained, even though he should continue to live on the coarsest fare, and his children should run barefooted, as in our country they have been in the habit of doing for ages. The payment of school-fees, the renting of a family pew in church, a respectable Sabbath attire, the purchase of books to the extent of a small household library, the enjoyment of one afternoon in the week for recreation in the fields, or the exchange of decent hospitalities with their acquaintances and neighbours—these form the main constituents and indications of that higher standard and style of enjoyment, which, next to the salvation of their souls, we most desire for our artizans and our labourers. If the observation of our friends in the south leads them to regard all this as Utopian and unlikely, if the habitudes of their own people be generally such as have made them to associate with the increase of their means nothing else than the increase of their sensual, or even of their brutal and vicious gratifications—we can only wish that their eyes were at length opened to the vanity of all their economics, and that they saw how their alone safety lay in a better moral and ecclesiastical regimen for the peasantry of England.

We have already exceeded our limits—nor is there room for more than a few brief and closing paragraphs on our author's references to what might be termed the Political Economy of the Bible. His reverence for the Word of God is worthy of all commendation; but nothing short of his own infallibility could justify either the tone of authority wherewith he gives forth his own understanding of it, or the style of his fulminations against other men. But instead of any further reckonings with him, let us now consider, and with all brevity, what light, if any, the Scriptures have cast on the questions now at issue among our chief speculators on the philosophy of human affairs. There are many of these we are sensible, who would never think of looking to this quarter for any guidance or information upon the subject. But we beg leave to differ from them—convinced as we are that the doctrine of the Sacred Volume will bear to be confronted with truth throughout all her departments, and wherever to be found—nay that, not only has it nothing to fear from the hostility of all the sciences put together, but that it is replete with proofs as well as illustrations, fitted to shed a new evidence and glory over some of the noblest discoveries of modern times.

The first instance that we shall offer is taken from the example of our Saviour—we mean in the style and object of His various miracles; and more especially of those which, as having for their object the relief of human suffering, might be termed His miracles of mercy. The thing more particularly to be remarked upon is, the difference of procedure between His relief of want and His relief of disease. There are only two recorded instances of His having fed the people miraculously when they happened to be overtaken with hunger—for on a third occasion He declined so to gratify their wishes, (John vi. 26, 27.) There are innumerable instances, on the other hand, of His having cured the diseased miraculously, and not one instance recorded of His having declined one application for it. In other words, He brought down health by miracle indefinitely, but not so with food; and on this difference there has been founded an argument for the distinction which ought to be observed between a charity for mere indigence, and a charity for disease. A public charity for the one tends to multiply its objects—because it enlists the human will on the side, if not of poverty, at least of the dissipation and indolence which lead to poverty. A public charity for the other will scarcely, if ever, enlist the human will on the side of disease. Thousands might wilfully become poor, and so be qualified for admission into the one charity. Very rarely, so rare that it were monstrously unnatural, will one become wilfully blind, or dumb, or maimed, or palsied, or lunatic—that he might be qualified for admission into the other charity. Our Saviour, as if proceeding on this distinction, restrained the exercise of His power to multiply loaves at pleasure—for had He done so without let or limitation, it would have disorganized Judea—setting all the people agog in idle and trooping multitudes, after Him for food. He does not seem to have laid any such restraint on the exercise of His healing power; and the only effect of this was to bring out from their lurking places the helpless and the impotent folk, to be cured of their diseases. On this remarkable feature in the history of our Saviour, there has been grounded a confirmation of the reasonings against public charities for the relief of want, and on the side of public charities for the relief of disease. Our Saviour was a public character; and His doings behoved to have all the effect of a public charity. Whatever might be the influence of this consideration on the question of institutes for poverty, it is all in favour of medical institutes; and so there are Political Economists who look adversely on the former, yet hail the latter, with the most unbounded satisfaction. Certain it is, that in this department at least, they drop the maxim of “*Laissez faire*,” and look not only with complacency on sanitary regulations for the public health, even at

the expense of Government; but would encourage to the utmost the erection of infirmaries and all sorts of medical asylums, aye and until the whole demand and necessity for these were overtaken.

Our second instance is taken from the example of the Apostles—and, in particular, from that of the twelve in Jerusalem, as compared and contrasted with that of Paul, who had most to do with the churches at a distance. The former, after that the disciples had increased to five or six thousand, declined all part or management in the dispensation of the poor's money—and this, because it encroached upon the time which should be wholly given to the ministry of the word and to prayer, (Acts, vi. 2, 4.) The Apostle of the Gentiles, on the other hand, more burdened with the care and labour of his ecclesiastical duties, than any or all of the others, nevertheless betook himself to the occupation of a tent-maker—and this as an example to others, in that his own hands ministered to his own necessities, (Acts, xx. 34; 2d Thess. iii. 8-10.) It is well that the givers should be told their duty; but it is also well that the receivers, or they who seek to be receivers, should be told theirs. A lesson of generosity in their distributions to the one class, is not more essential than a lesson of moderation in their desires, and of honourable independence on the bounty of their superiors, is to the other class. It was for the sake of this latter lesson, that this great Apostle made such a sacrifice of that time and strength which might otherwise have been consecrated to the direct ministrations of the Gospel. It is of fully as great moral importance that the poor should be rightly taught in this matter as the rich; and it is the confident belief of certain political economists, that were both these parties faithfully and evenly dealt with in this way, the two ends might easily be made so to meet, as to result in a far happier community, with greatly less of want and wretchedness than we have at present—and this without a public charity, and without a poor-rate. When this inspired teacher of righteousness tells his people to work with their own hands that they may have lack of nothing, he points out the way in which they should help themselves, (1 Thess. iv. 12.) When he tells them to work with their hands that they may have to give to him that needeth, he points out the way in which they might help others also, (Eph. iv. 28.) We have no desire to spare or to exonerate the wealthy; but it is our firm conviction that a far mightier stride will be made towards a right economic state, by the common people being effectually trained to do what they might, and to do what they ought. And even should our conviction proceed so far, as to make us think that by the operation of moral causes throughout the mass of society, the economy of a legal pauperism might not only with safety, but

with great and positive advantage be superseded, there is surely enough of Bible principle on our side, if not to prove this doctrine, at least to protect it from those imputations of the irreligious and the unscriptural, which have been so plentifully cast upon it.

But again, not only can we make our appeal to the specific injunction now quoted by us—there is a great pervading generality which characterizes the ethics of the New Testament, and which is strikingly in unison with the economics of those who, with Malthus and others (but irrespectively of his peculiar doctrine on the subject of population), agree in opposing that system of legalized charity which obtains throughout England. What we advert to is the broad, and clear, and stable distinction which subsists between the two great classes of human virtue—those of justice on the one hand, and of benevolence on the other—or, to avail ourselves of the old scholastic nomenclature, those of perfect and those of imperfect obligation. Utilitarians and Socinians would overbear this distinction by resolving all the moralities into benevolence alone—making justice and truth but the ministers or the subordinates of this sovereign among the virtues, nay carrying this principle upward to the divine character, and merging all into parental love, as the single moral attribute of the Godhead. It is thus that they would set aside the doctrine of the atonement, as if mercy to the penitent required no satisfaction to justice for the outrage inflicted on a broken law—while we, on the contrary, look on the express revelation of this doctrine in the Bible, as a testimony to the separate and independent place which justice holds among the virtues; and so as a demonstration of the orthodox faith and the orthodox ethical philosophy being at one. But there is another method of confounding the virtues by obliterating the limits and the land-marks of separation betwixt them—for while utilitarians, on the one hand, would subordinate all to benevolence, there is another class who might be termed ultra and extreme jurists, that would subordinate all to justice, and so to the regulations and enforcements of law—the proper function of which is to protect the rights of justice, and to punish or redress the wrongs by which it is invaded. We hold that justice and humanity have each its own separate domain in the territory of human affairs; and that while it is the proper office of law to take charge of the one department, the other should be left to the sympathies of nature, or to the love and liberty of the Gospel. It is thus that in our estimation the jurisprudence of England has made a mischievous extension of itself beyond its own rightful and legitimate boundaries, by transmuting that charity, which ought to have been altogether a thing of love, into a thing of fierce and angry litigation. “The quality of mercy is not strained;” and they who, on this principle, are enemies to a poor-rate, are

grievously misconceived by those who charge them with a cold-blooded indifference to the wants and sufferings of our species. It is because they long to commit the relief of these where Nature and Christianity have committed them—to the relative and compassionate instincts implanted by the one, to the sacred duties enjoined by the other on the side of a diffusive and cheerful beneficence—(2 Cor. ix. 7 ; 1 Tim. vi. 18,) it is because of this that they would like to rid our country of that compulsory pauperism, by the freezing influences of which, all the social virtues both of kindred and of neighbourhood have been well-nigh overborne. The work before us, with much of the dissonant and the unsavoury, has its bright passages ; and none more so than the narratives of the doings of two benevolent clergymen of the Church of England in their respective parishes.\* One of these has reduced his pauperism to £20 a year. It might be easy to *bring it down* to this, but not to *keep it down*, if the legal instead of the voluntary character shall still adhere to it. Our author still further thinks that the pauperism of all England might, in virtue of his expedients, be brought down to two millions a year. We are still more sanguine than he, for we think that by his one expedient of a universal Christian education, though dropping all the rest, we could not only overtake all the pauperism which he proposes to do, but the two millions to the bargain. To this we believe that England might be brought, but not till she recalls what many of her authors proclaim and glory in as her peculiar boast, yet which we cannot help regarding as the magnificent blunder of her poor-law. All her endless changes and modifications will never disarm this great master-evil, of the radical and inherent mischief which is bound up with the very principle of a compulsory provision. Ere she can be freed from this enormous disease of her body politic, she must learn so to discriminate as to give to justice the things of justice, and to humanity the things of humanity.

But, it may be asked, are not scriptural examples in favour of this law ? We reply in the negative ; for, in the first place, the charity of the churches in the New Testament, made up of the alms of the faithful, was voluntary in its origin, and its distributions were confined to the members of the respective congregations, subject to discipline, and laid under the severest rebuke, or even exclusion from the society, if, trusting to the public fund, they lived in idleness, or neglected their relatives, or in any other way made a gain of godliness, (1 Tim. v. 4, 8, 11, 16.) And then, as to the system of relief which obtained in Judea, though

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\* See the communications at the end of the Work subscribed by H. P. Jeston and Samuel Lyons.

it had more of a wholesale character than the other, as standing in a sort of general relationship to the population at large—there is one vital and essential difference between the Jewish and the English poor-laws. By the former, there was a third tithe, or tithe every third year, amounting therefore to a thirtieth part of the annual produce—and this assigned, not to the support of poverty at large, or of poverty, however originated, but to the specific cases of widowhood and orphanage, and subject moreover to the burden of an occasional charge for the maintenance both of Levites and of strangers, (Deut. xiv. 27—29 ; xxvi. 12, 13.) Now this differs *toto cælo* from the poor-law of England, which proclaims a universal right, or a right on the part of every man pleadable at a court of equity, to the means of subsistence, whatever his past misconduct or present character might chance to turn out—thus laying open all property to inroads which are quite indefinite, and which can only be kept in check by the methods of such a harsh and rigorous administration, as cannot fail to place the higher and lower classes in a state of mutual exasperation and hostility against each other. It were a near assimilation to the system of public charity which obtained among the Hebrews, should a fixed proportion or fixed property be assigned in each parish for the relief of its poor—thereby securing the integrity of all other property, because then exempted from all legal claim for an object thus continually provided for ; and, what were of vast importance, effecting a most wholesome change in the tone and spirit of the applicants themselves. What is now a rapacious and remorseless spirit, when drawing on a wealth conceived to be indefinite and inexhaustible, would be restrained by conscience, and honour, and sympathy, under an economy which made it palpable to all, that the more lightly they bore on the common fund set apart for extreme want, the greater would be its sufficiency for the relief of those families which were more helpless and destitute than their own. They utterly mistake the poor who regard them as incapable of being operated upon by such generous and noble-minded considerations as these. Under the moral regimen of a well and wisely administered parish, the chivalrous emulation could easily be set agoing, of who should be least burdensome on the public charity, and who of consequence the largest benefactors of the poorest and most wretched in the neighbourhood where they lived.

But our limits have been transgressed, and our liberty to expatiate any farther is for the present terminated. Else we might have adduced other instances, and more especially in some of the later rectifications, which have been made on the views of former speculators in this department of philosophy. The way, most



assuredly, to vindicate the paramount authority of Scripture—to “bring forth its righteousness as the light, and its judgment as the noon-day,”—is not to hoodwink any of the sciences, but to lay open the truths of all, when it will be found that there is a full and unexcepted harmony between the word of God and the works of God. And this holds as much of Political Economy as of any other branch of human knowledge. The accumulating policy of Dr. Adam Smith will at length give way, before the doctrine that capital has its limits as well as population; and that the Christian liberality of merchants would not only secure them from the woes denounced in the Bible against those who, hasting to be rich, pierce themselves through with many sorrows, but would induce a far more healthful state of commerce than it is possible to maintain with the distempered over-trading of the present day. The underselling policy of the mercantile system will also give way, before the demonstration of its utter insignificance to the real strength and resources of our nation. Even the maxim of *Laissez-faire*, confined, as it ever should have been, to what has been well termed the mere Catallactics of Political Economy, to the exchange of commodities with each other—this maxim will cease in time to impede the functions of a righteous government, charging itself with the health and the morals and even the Christianity of its subjects. It is thus that the disciples of an older school are gradually giving in to the lessons of that better philosophy, which not only tolerates but requires of legislators, that they should concern themselves both with the education and virtue of the people—granting endowments for the one, and removing, as far as in them lies, every nuisance which endangers the safety of the other. Had our author known this much, it might have saved him the trouble of all his petulant and splenetic effusions against a department of human learning into which he has rushed blindfold, and with a confidence that only brings the greater discredit both upon himself and upon his lucubrations. The chief thing to be lamented is, the discredit in which it is fitted to involve the sacred and all-important cause of a universal religious education—a subject, truly, on which all parties in the State need to be well-lessoned, and which would require the warning voice of a calm and enlightened and authoritative Mentor, to be done with proper energy and effect. The lesson is here given, no doubt, but given with such unseemly accompaniments as must lessen and impair its efficacy. It is an invaluable lesson notwithstanding; and we know of no other by which to arrest the imminent and tremendous perils that overhang our nation.

ART. II.—*The Collected Works of SIR HUMPHRY DAVY, Bart., LL.D., P.R.S., Foreign Associate of the Institute of France, etc. Edited by his Brother, JOHN DAVY, M.D., F.R.S., 3 Vols. London: 1839.*

It will be sixty-six years next seventeenth of December since Humphry Davy was born at the homely and secluded little town of Penzance, among the mines of Cornwall. It is a county of classical antiquity for commerce with the world in its metallic riches. It is streaked with beauty. It spurns the tides of both St. George's and the English Channels with its Plutonic cliffs. The Atlantic is beyond.

His mother, Grace Millett, was left an orphan child, in company with an elder and a younger sister. They were not in want, however; and they were kindly guided by a good man, Tonkin, a surgeon-apothecary of the place, who had lodged with their parents. She was a mild and reflective woman, and, to have done so well by her family, must have been eminently steady of purpose. She had five children, yet never made a favourite of Humphry, her first-born and her stay; and happily she lived to see his honourable labours crowned with success by God and man.

His father Robert was bred in London to the liberal old handicraft of wood-carving. He did not do much work at Penzance, but farmed the little copyhold of Varfell, some two miles out of the town. He was venturesome upon a little scale, and apt to lose his money. A man of social temper, if not of jovial dispositions, Mr. Davy seems to have walked through the world as becomingly as possible. He was short-lived like his son, and died when Humphry was only sixteen.

The name of Davy stands on the old church-tablets of the neighbourhood as that of the proprietors of Varfell, a small estate in Mountsbay. One of these is so far back in date, indeed, as 1635; but the lineage of Sir Humphry Davy, Baronet, Doctor of Laws, and President of the Royal Society, can be traced no farther up than to his grandfather, a substantial house-builder in the west of Cornwall. The Milletts, too, one of his biographers is careful to tell the enlightened world, were originally 'aristocratic and wealthy;' but alas! their fortunes had so crumbled down as to leave little Grace and her sisters the heirs of a mercery-shop in a place with no more than 2000 inhabitants. Let the Milletts and the Davys, however, have been in ancestry what they may, so small a consideration can never affect the simple fact that the one Davy, whom history cares about, was born and bred

amid the influences of what may be called the trades-professional sphere of the society composing the most primitive and isolated of English mining towns, and that in somewhat needy and afflictive circumstances. It is more interesting to know that from the Last of the Carvers, as the people of Penzance called his skilful father, he inherited a contriving head and learned hands; while to his gentle mother he owed the temperament and the habits of serious contemplation.

His boyhood was in no way remarkable. He learned his letters quickly; read *Æsop's fables* and the *Pilgrim's Progress* like other British lads; preferred the perusal of history books to learning his lessons; was an idle schoolboy in fact; used to harangue his companions, as well as tell them stories; made verses, thunder-powder and turnip-lanterns; caught grey mullet at the pier better than his playmates, by the help of a device of his own; organized and headed troops of puerile soldiers, with pasteboard shields and wooden swords; and, as he grew bigger, shot birds among the lanes, as well as got up some sort of play for his school-fellows and himself to act in character. Consequently, there is no wonder that when sent to Cardew's school at Truro, at fourteen years of age, the Doctor 'found him very deficient in the qualifications for the class of his age,' and 'could not discern the faculties by which he was afterwards so distinguished;' although 'his turn for poetry' was both noticed and encouraged. In a word, living more with old Tonkin than with his parents, the amiable yet wilful boy was, as he long after rejoiced to remember, left very much to himself, was put on no particular plan of study, and enjoyed much idleness: a noble education in those rare conjunctions where affectionate yet indulgent friends, and the simple manners of a country-town, conspire with magnificent and multi-form displays of Nature to kindle and unfold a young character, in which the elements are so sweetly tempered as they were in Davy.

Leaving the Truro school at fifteen he idled, played billiards, fished, fowled, swam and took lessons in French; till, two years after, he was apprenticed to a medical practitioner of the name of Borlase. His father having died the year before, he now displayed that determination to succeed which not only never forsook him, but conducted him from victory to victory; as it did Napoleon, and as it shall lead every man of prowess that is yet to act upon the fortunes of the world. His faithful brother and biographer has recorded a plan of study composed by the future discoverer at this time; embracing theology natural and revealed, geography, six professional studies, logic, physics, rhetoric and oratory, history, mathematics, and seven languages. This pitch of cultivation he never reached, and

never flew ; but how aspiring ! In truth he was too spontaneous to be a plodder, and had not yet acquired that nobler way of using books which is never learned but by a few. Connected with this was the amazing rapidity with which he would rush through a book from his very boyhood. A youth of sinewy faculty, rather than of craving capacity, he felt the noble necessity of discharging his bursting but imprisoned force in repeated, and still repeated, acts of original production. Accordingly, he was for ever writing ; on religion, describing the arc of declension into solid materialism and of reascension into the more mobile elements of a kind of rational orthodoxy ; on government ; on climate ; on friendship and love ; on the ultimate end of being : and such subjects. He wandered alone by the shore, oppugning the all-eloquent sea in order to practise his ambitious oratory : alone he sought and loved all the great and beautiful objects around him, and wooed them too, for his muse was still awake in spite of metaphysics and medicine : and he sat live-long hours alone upon the cliffs of 'Majestic Michael,' dreaming of glory ; the master-passion of his life already asserting her royal prerogative. Then we are told how he fell in love with a young French stranger, and wrote impassioned sonnets in her praise : and we believe it, love being an almost unfailing element of genius ; for genius is nothing but a thorough self-reliant manliness after all, resolute to do and become all that manhood may. Be these fine things about love and genius as they may, however, poor Davy's early passion must have been very transitory. Did we not know that women generally smile upon the fervid, and that Dr. Paris is a gossip, we should say that probably the youthful savant's unheeded and ungainly figure defeated him in the eyes of the fair foreigner, in spite of his fine hair, his sparkling eyes and his eloquence. At all events, his young heart was already on fire for glory ; and on he pressed to feed, if not to quench, the avidity of its rage by conquests of another kind. Ambitious of graduating one day in medicine, at Edinburgh, he advanced from his crude but bold disquisitions in metaphysics to professional studies with the same ardour, and speculated there also like a young Titani. About nineteen he began the study of chemistry ; after a year of geometry and other branches of mathematics, won from the hand of Time by his own arm. Now commenced his life for the world. He had not been many months studying LAVOISIER's lucid Elements and, in his self-tuitive way, experimenting with glasses and cups, plates and saucers, tobacco-pipes and bladders, old barometer-tubes and a syringe, when, with the audacity of an eaglet, he surveyed the science from his own point of view ; thought he could 'overthrow the French chemistry in half an hour ;' and propounded a new theory of heat and light for himself, doing his little best to

support it by a series of rude and inapplicable, but ingenious experiments. Then-a-days one could acquire a very complete book-knowledge of chemistry, as a theory of one part of nature, in a very short space of time. The erroneous theory, devised by Beccher and propounded by STAHL, which referred all chemical phenomena to the agency of an invisible, inseparable and imaginary substance, called Phlogiston, had enough of truth in it: (viz. the recognition of the essential resemblance that exists between the natural operations of the rusting and fixation of metals and the burning of bodies, as well as the analogy in composition of acids, alkalis, earths and metallic calces) this doctrine of phlogiston had enough of truth in it to have enabled Neumann, Pott and Margraaf; Réaumur, Duhamel and Macquer; Bergmann and Scheele; Black, Priestley and Cavendish, to collect a compacted body of well-ascertained and far from ill-arranged observations. These the labours of LAVOISIER and his countrymen Berthollet, Morveau, Monge and Fourcroy had rendered still more definite and indubitable: and then, to consummate the movement (which the doctrine of STAHL did, let it never be forgotten, in reality originate) those facts had been disenchanted of the talisman that had hitherto held them together, in charmed bondage to the idea of the whimsical but magnificent Joachim Beccher, during the space of nearly a hundred years; and been drawn, as orderly and almost as easily reckoned as the planets, around the central thought of the lucid and organic Lawgiver. Accordingly, all that Davy could find in his *Elementary Treatise*\* we undertake to describe in a single sentence. If we fail it shall not be our fault, but our courteous reader's pleasure; inasmuch as we shall not break it down except for the sake of returning his courtesy in not only accompanying us so far as we have come, but in now resolving to go forward, in defiance of the technical barbarities and sterner difficulties that may seem to beset the way, to see what our fearless young Cornish giant really did for this curious science.

Well, from LAVOISIER he learned that the earth, the water and the air, with all that they include, are the objects of the chemist's fond investigation: That he inquires into the composition of each of them in particular, in quest of their general law of composition: That the earth is made up of metals and other combustible solids, oxides of metals, acids, alkalis and earths; the air of three kinds of air, oxygen about 20 parts and nitrogen about 80 parts in 100, with but a small proportion of carbonic acid

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\* *Traité Élémentaire de Chimie, présenté dans un ordre nouveau et d'après les découvertes modernes, &c. Par M. Lavoisier, &c. 1789.*

in 1000 parts; and the water of oxygen nearly 8 parts and hydrogen, another kind of air, 1 part by weight, holding dissolved in its substance varying quantities of such of the soluble ingredients of the earth and the air as have been exposed to its action: That according to the new principle regarding the material elements, viz. that every substance, not resolved by the skill of the chemist into two or more simpler ones, is for the time being to be counted for an element, the world in gross is produced by the combinations and mixtures of seventeen metals, from antimony down to zinc; of six non-metallic oxidable bodies, three\* known and three† only inferred; of five earths; of two alkalis;‡ of three gases, oxygen, nitrogen and hydrogen, the first of these being the most important in the actual operations of nature, at least in this planet; and of two imponderable but not inseparable creatures, heat and light, which cannot be procured apart from the more substantial forms of matter, either singly or together: That as the mechanical phenomena of the globe, such as the tides, the flow of rivers, the descent of avalanches, the fall of rains and the sweep of winds, result from changes in place among the mingled sensible components of creation, produced by the force of gravitation; so the chemical phenomena of the same, such as combustion, phosphorescence, lightning, the quickening of the blood of animals by respiration, the vegetation of plants and animals, (so far as that is unconnected with a higher force, above chemistry as well as superior to gravitation) the corrosion of metals, the weathering of rocks, putrefaction, fermentation, with all sorts of decay and renovation in short, result from changes in place among the combined insensible ingredients of sensible shapes, that is among the particles of matter, produced by the force of affinity, a word introduced by Barchusen, and first defined by Boerhaave: That the differences between gravitation and affinity are, first, that the former moves masses, the latter particles of matter; and, secondly, that the former draws and binds all kinds of masses to each other, but the latter only different kinds of particles; so that particles of oxygen do not combine chemically together, nor hydrogen particles together, but oxygen and hydrogen, or (circumstances being favourable) any other two kinds do unite so as to produce a third new species of matter, (in this instance it is water,) possessing none of the specific properties of either of its ingredients: That gravitation operates upon particles precisely as upon masses, that is on all

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\* Carbon, sulphur, and phosphorus.

† The muriatic, fluoric and boracic radicals they were called.

‡ Although (2d edition, 1793,) Lavoisier does not put them among the elements, on account of their being so obviously compound.

kinds indifferently, so that particles of brimstone gravitate and cling to each other, although they do not chemically combine; and gravitation is then conveniently distinguished by the name of cohesion: That all other bodies are combined with quantities (!) of heat and light, each body with a specific quantity peculiar to itself, so that when one substance (say charcoal) combines with another (say oxygen) and produces a third (in this instance carbonic acid,) which cannot hold so much matter of light and heat as were summed up in the charcoal and oxygen that produced it, then the superfluity of heat and light are given out; in other words, the charcoal burns in the air, or unites rapidly with the oxygen, the two betwixt them setting free and projecting into space the quantity of heat and light that is over and above what is needful to the material composition of carbonic acid: That sulphur, phosphorus and nitrogen, as well as carbon, produce acids when united with oxygen, so that oxygen is a generator of acids, whence its name; while the metals by union with oxygen produce oxides which greatly resemble the undecomposed alkalis, the earths being intermediate links of analogy, so that oxygen might be a sort of principle of alkalinity also; whence LAVOISIER hinted that the earths should one day be found to be oxides of metallic bases then unknown: That when the process of oxidation is slowly undergone, there is less manifest extrication of heat, but exactly the same quantity of heat for the same quantity of matter oxidized: That in many such instances of slower oxidation there appears no light at all, that is there is no high combustion, and it was hence inferred by the majority that light is not a substance by itself, but only a form of heat, or even only an effect produced by the rapid motion of quickly liberated particles of heat, although LAVOISIER retained it in the *Elementary Treatise*, resting, it is to be presumed, on the Newtonian doctrine of light: That the respiration of animals, and many familiar natural alterations, are instances of this kind of slow combustion, and that by this kindly glow of a gentle chemical action of the 'breath of life' upon the 'blood which is the life,' is the animal frame kept alive and warm: And, to conclude at last, that all the experimental and speculative minor consequences that are fairly and authoritatively deducible from these greater propositions, with all their amplifications by succeeding labourers in new paths of research, shall be the creed of the true chemist now and for ever! Reader, rest awhile and breathe: and then go round again to the wicket, where you entered the labyrinth from which you have just escaped into the open country and the freer air. It is no Rosamond's bower, indeed; yet it is a pleasant coil; and we entreat you to try it thrice, before you either give it over in despair or condemn us for confusion worse confounded.

Such was the definite and orderly science the novice had to study and contemplate, but it did not satisfy his aspiring thought so long as half-a-year. The sagacious Black's doctrine of the materiality of heat, which bears the same historical relation to the system of LAVOISIER as the speculations of Beccher sustain to that of STAHL, he saw at once, with that keen glance into the deep analogy of nature which was destined to descry the secret art of decomposing the obdurate alkalis and earths, to be not only inconsistent with well-known though neglected facts, but unnecessary for the sufficient explanation of such as certainly appeared to afford it illustration. There is no doubt that he was right in this daring dissent, although he never did much directly to establish a better solution of the theorem, having been soon withdrawn from the prosecution of such subtle inquiries by triumphs of another kind. But the strange thing about these youthful speculations is the fact that our voluntary Coryphaeus differed as stoutly from the majority concerning the nature of light, and that in a diametrically opposite direction; for he maintained experimentally and otherwise that light is a chemical substance which is productive of vision only when its particles are uncombined and in projection. Then during all that happy year, reposing with inexperienced confidence upon his clever though rude and inconclusive experiments, corresponding with the quixotic Dr. Beddoes on the subject, talking and talking over it with Gregory Watt, who had gone to lodge at Mrs. Davy's house in the vain pursuit of health, and encouraged by Davies Gilbert, he wove himself such a fantastic theory of the wonder-working functions of this Lucifer of his in the economy of the universe! Among other things he concluded that oxygen, as it exists in the atmosphere, is a compound of real oxygen and the matter of light; that when a taper burns this light is set free, while the wax unites with the actual oxygenous principle of oxygen and melts 'into thin air.' That, when a man inspires, this phosphorus (such was the name he put upon the ordinary oxygen of the atmosphere) is absorbed by the blood, carried to the brain, and there decomposed into true oxygen and light: And that the light thus liberated within the most intimate recesses of the 'golden bowl,' from which the stream of higher life appeared to permeate the body, is the nervous energy and the proximate cause of sensation, perception and emotion. Think of the marvellous projector, nineteen summers old, inhaling the radiance of the sun, nourishing his life upon the glory of the world, and rendering it back to the inexhaustible shekinah in the sublimated form of grateful sensations, brave thoughts and pious contemplations! In sad and sober truth, the enthusiast was then a materialist, and this dazzling vision, which sanctified the divinity of nature to



his kindled imagination, was a compromise between his impersonal piety and the eminently practical but brilliant science by which he was taken captive. Old Beddoes was a convert to the dream !

Dr. Beddoes, once an Oxford professor of chemistry, was the most benevolent but least effective of projectors. Soon after the labours of the pneumatic chemists, Black and Scheele, Priestley and Cavendish, had conducted to the conclusion, one day unexpected, that there are many kinds of air, as there are numerous species of liquid and solid matters, the primary relations to animal life of the kinds that are in the atmosphere were discovered. The earliest distinctions in pneumatic chemistry, indeed, were connected with these very relations. Scheele called Priestley's dephlogisticated air by the name of empyreal air, and Condorcet by that of vital air, both of them on account of its necessity to the sustenance of life ; and when the associated French chemists gave it the systematic appellation of oxygen, they fixed that of azote upon nitrogen, in order to intimate that it is privatively destructive of animal organization. The poisonous quality of carbonic acid, the chokedamp of the miner ; the pungency of ammonia ; the acridity of sulphurous and nitrous acids ; the insipidity and negative properties of hydrogen were all known ; and it became desirable to investigate the medicinal virtues of these new and subtle agents. The excellent Beddoes, with the help of subscriptions from the Wedgewoods, and a few other amiable knight-errants in the cause of the amelioration of the condition of mankind by the applications of physical science, established the Pneumatic Institution of Bristol for this purpose. Knowing young Davy of Penzance by correspondence, and admiring him, he offered him the situation of director of the laboratory : and the ingenious visionary was thus, ere he completed his 20th year, launched into the world from the quaint solitudes of Mount's Bay ; where, by the kindest secret influences and without noise of hammer, he had been built up into the buoyant and exulting form we have just admired, ' with sails full set to catch the gale of praise.'

A happy launch it was. At Bristol now ; animated by the unfeigned admiration of poor Beddoes ; ennobled by the friendship of his beautiful, gracious and amiable lady ; introduced to the companionship of the graceful and melodious Southey ; become a darling ' thing of hope,' of more hope than even himself or any other, to the wondrous Coleridge ; within easy reach of his first scientific friend, the accomplished Gregory Watt, and of Keir of Birmingham, the relic of another age ; in the way of meeting with famous philosophers on a kind of equality of terms ; in a well-appointed laboratory at last, and nothing else to do but

investigate : what a delicious, and even perilous, change for the gallant explorer ! yet wisely and bravely he held on his course. A few weeks before, with no propitious breeze behind and no bounding prospect before him, he had written in his solitary notebook... 'I have neither riches, nor power, nor birth to recommend me ; yet, if I live, I trust I shall not be of less service to mankind and to my friends than if I had been born with these advantages.'

Accordingly, during the two years he spent in the service of the Pneumatic Institution, he laboured at his ordained calling of discovery like a genuine apostle. First of all, he made some more experiments on heat and light, writing out his opinions on 205 pages of Beddoes' Contributions in the shape of essays. The severity of critics conspired with his growing knowledge of irreconcilable facts very soon to emancipate him from his delusions about phosoxigen, and he hastened to publish himself a sceptic in his own doctrine. According to both Paris and Dr. Davy, he was wofully mortified by the arrogance, precipitation and errors of this maiden work ; but we heartily concur with his adoring brother in the opinion that he had little need, for it is an eloquent production, and full of that lofty kind of promise which is real performance.

This misadventure told well upon his subsequent labours as a memorable warning. Accordingly, his next or rather his first discovery was of another order of pretension. He found that the skin or epidermis of the canes, the reeds and the grasses is pervaded by a delicate web of flint, which supports their tall and shapely stems like an outer skeleton.

He did not dally, however, with dainty themes. In connexion with the purposes of the Institution, he wished to inhale Priestley's deplogisticated nitrous air, in order to put to the test a foolish conjecture of one Mitchell, an American, that it is a principle of contagion endowed with extraordinary power. In contempt for this vagary, he at once exposed wounds to the action of the gas, and breathed it among common air. It was necessary to invent a method of preparing it in purity and plenty, before the investigation could be brought to a purpose-like conclusion. After a laborious series of trials, he devised the very beautiful one that is now universally employed ; viz. the decomposition by heat of the crystals of nitrate of ammonia, which are thereby resolved into watery vapour and the desiderated gas. Under the famous name of nitrous oxide, he minutely examined and recorded its properties for the first time. He then proceeded to breathe it and, to his rapturous delight, discovered the rapid and delectable intoxication which it produces on the majority of people. He breathed it from bags, and within a box, and always were

the effects uncontrollable and sweet on his glowing temperament. In his note-books he wrote... 'I seemed a new being;' 'I seemed a sublime being newly created;' 'as if possessed of new organs;' and, best of all, this line of beauty, which fills and satisfies the ear of every genuine bacchanal in these ærial orgies, because it is true,

'Yet is my mouth replete with murmuring sound.'

He tried its effect on Mr. Tobin, Mr. Clayfield, Dr. Kinglake, Southey and Coleridge, with similar results. In no instance did the inhalation do any material harm, although it seemed to revive old rheumatisms in the joints of Kinglake. Not even did any depression follow the extravagant but transitory excitement. In connexion with a kind of homœopathic theory of the art of healing which he cherished at that time, the discoverer was sanguine of its useful application to medicine. It might be the potable gold of Geber, the vivifying quintessence of the elements of Raymond Lully, the water of life of Basil Valentine, the elixir of Paracelsus, or at least some purified and attempered supporter of vitality, for its composition was almost identical in ingredients with that of the atmosphere! yet, in spite of this sudden appeal to his imagination and of his inexperience in the practice of physic, he never for a moment overstepped the modesty of nature; but faithfully recorded its inutility, and pointed out the fallacies attendant on the trial of so strange and novel a medicinal agent. He proceeded to make certain daring experiments on carbonic acid, carburetted hydrogen, nitric oxide and other poisonous airs; which nearly cost us his invaluable life. After ten months of incessant labour, interrupted only by an elated run, in quest of squandered health, to Cornwall, he published his first considerable work; the 'Researches, chemical and philosophical, chiefly concerning nitrous oxide and its respiration;' in the summer of 1800.

He did not wear his laurels with content. His passion for discovery was too irrepressible, and his 'look towards future greatness' had been too blasting for repose. Convinced that 'the most sublime and important part of chemistry (was) yet unknown,' he cast an eager glance at the very penetralia of the science, and devised plans for the decomposition of those bodies which were known to be compound, but had never been forced to yield up their elements, viz. the muriatic, fluoric and boracic acids; in order that he might grasp those secret radicals, which the Lavoisierians had ventured to anticipate. These mistaken devices did ultimately conduct to one of the two greatest achievements in his subsequent career. Meanwhile he more successfully laid hold of the galvanic pile of Volta, which was afterwards

to work such wonders in his favoured hands, and communicated five brief accounts of experiments to the pages of Nicholson's Journal, in the six months before his removal to London. Nor is this all that is to be told of his singular activity during the two admirable years he spent at Bristol. He must have read a good deal of science and general literature; but he was forever writing, forever projecting: writing magnificats of nature in blank verse; essays on education, luxury, genius and dreaming; and fragments of metaphysical fiction and desultory notes: and projecting philosophical narratives, romances and an epic in six books, relating the deliverance of the Israelites under the guidance of Moses! Let us refresh ourselves with a single little extract from the abstract of a disquisition on Luxury, before we follow the sage of two-and-twenty years to the vortices of London life. It is this: 'Nature and domestic attachments the true sources of happiness. Cosmopolitanism, the love of notoriety, (not fame,) the love of pleasure, all fatal to the first and strongest feeling of our nature.'

The Royal Institution of Great Britain originated, at the end of last century, between the committee of a London Society for bettering the condition of the Poor, and that well-known soldier of fortune and effective man of practical science, Count Rumford. It was to be supported by the contributions of members; to bring science into closer contact with the useful arts by committees of research on baking, cooking, and the like; to shed the light of science among the higher classes by morning lectures: and it had been providentially appointed to become the scene of the next twelve years of Davy's life and labours. On the recommendation of the late accomplished Professor Hope of Edinburgh, Rumford invited Davy, already known to him by reputation, to fill the place of assistant lecturer on Chemistry and director of the Laboratory, with the prospect of being soon made professor in the room of ill-used Dr. Garnett.

It is said that Rumford was sadly disappointed when he saw him, so rustic was he in his air. His success as a lecturer, however, was instantaneous. Everything was propitious. The Continent was closed against the Aristocracy. The Institution was highly patronized, and it was a novelty. The Chemistry of LAVOISIER was easy, clear and captivating, as has been shown. Davy himself was young; simple as a child, yet daring as a man; with an actual and a strange discovery already under his feet; a decisive experimentalist; and glowing with the fervour of a rude native eloquence, which assumed a metropolitan polish with only too much rapidity. His friend Purkis says that the enthusiastic admiration, with which he was hailed, can hardly be imagined now. Not only men of the highest rank, men of science, men

of letters and men of trade ; but women of fashion and blue-stockings, old and young, pressed into the theatre of the Institution, to cover him with applause. ' Compliments, invitations and presents, were showered upon him in abundance from all quarters.' His acquaintance and society were eagerly sought. At length the Duchess of Gordon set her 'gracious, graceful, graceless grace's' eye upon the prodigy : and it drew him into the charmed circle of fashion ; there to shine, and shining burn, and burning waste the exhaustible fund of force that was in his well-knit frame. How he changed in the focus of such unmeasured and ungenial approbation ! At the sound of the plaudits of the brilliant crowds, that surrounded him in the spacious lecture-room, he erected his somewhat careless shape ; and the will quickly took that neglected possession and conscious command of every muscle of his frame, which is essential to the graceful movements of the human body. His clear outlooking eye, that had hitherto beamed only with intelligence, began to light up his heavier features with an unhidden sense of superiority. His rich light-brown hair glistened amid the incense of the drawingroom. His largish but eloquent mouth was soon accustomed to pronounce with both elegance and precision. In a word, his countenance and figure expanded in the sunshine. It was natural. Habitual emotion, especially of the aspiring kind, is more capable of modifying the form and bearing of a man than one is apt to think for. This it is that draws one natural line of demarcation between the many different orders of society, producing the most delicate distinction of varieties in demeanour. Davy is an instance. He went farther than nature led him, it is true ; and 'assumed the garb and manners of a man of fashion.' What another change for the Bristol chemist and the solitary rhapsodist of Penzance !

Distant ones trembled for his safety, and warned him of his danger. If in peril, however, he was not subdued ; and in his five-and-twentieth summer he assured his excellent and unfailing friend, Mr. Poole of Nether Stowey, that 'the age of danger had passed away.' 'There are,' says he, 'in the intellectual being of all men paramount elements, certain habits and passions that cannot change. I am a lover of nature, with an ungratified imagination. I shall continue to search for untasted charms, for hidden beauties. My real, my waking existence is amongst the objects of scientific research.' This confidence in the persistency of genius in general, and his own passion for the glory of discovery in particular, was stout, but not overweening.

He was at his place in the laboratory from ten or eleven till three or four, day after day, just as he had been at Bristol ; and the world knows what he accomplished there. In preparing his

lectures never was a man so extravagantly laborious. Rarely or never spending the evening in his rooms at the Institution, he confined himself entirely the day before each lecture; wrote it; and rehearsed with his assistants, experiments and all, in order to ensure their dexterity and his own felicity of delivery. 'He used,' says Dr. Davy, 'at this recital, to mark the words which required emphasis, and study the effect of intonation, often repeating a passage two or three different times to witness the difference of effect of variation in the voice.' Notwithstanding, however, of this theatrical finicism, he was always himself again before an audience; nothing being strong enough to stifle or repress his native sincerity and earnestness of soul. We have been told, indeed, by one of the greatest men, and certainly the ablest critic now alive in Britain, that while he was express and admirable so long as he expounded scientific details, he would plume himself without taste, and swell without discrimination, when he diverged into subjects of general reflection, or rather declamation; a kind of composition in which he was far-fetched, pompous and somewhat puerile to the very last. Yet Cavendish and Banks, Coleridge and Southey listened to him with pleasure. Such critics as had no sympathy with a many-gifted nature, that knew another language than that of science and had the good sense to speak it on occasion, condemned his luxuriance of imagery as incompatible with the matter in hand. Others sneered at the enthusiasm with which he bended and dilated over a beautiful crystal; incapable of conceiving how much of his dearest history was associated with such tiny forms. Once for all, the discoverer, who is bound to be as precise as a mathematician in defining his terms, as disciplinarian as a general before a fight in deploying his details, and as dry as a chancellor in summing up his evidence for the final deduction, has a right to be a man again, with all his faculties and sensibilities erect within him, when he leaves the definition, the muster and the decision; else how shall the apprehension of the manifold, confluent, interweaving and unspeakable sympathies of nature with the whole heart and mind of man be insinuated into the awaiting soul? Now that the press has become so good a substitute for the professorial chair as to have produced a Davy without its aid, it were well that there were far more of Davy's style of speaking about nature in the Universities; for it is only by the conflict and collision of kindled spirit with their unawakened thought and emotion, that young men shall ever be fired with the passion for a life of valorous endeavour, and excited to achievements worthy of their manhood.

Such was Davy's life for some twelve years of as substantial work as was ever done by man of science; adorned by a splendid succession of lectures on Chemistry, Chemistry applied to the

Arts, Chemistry in connexion with Geology, Agricultural Chemistry and his own Electro-chemical theory; and relieved by travels into Wales, Ireland and Scotland, in quest of mineralogical, geological and agricultural information, as well as of trout and game; for he was both an angler and a sportsman, though he always preferred the rod to the fowling-piece. In 1803 he investigated the process of tanning at the request of the Royal Institution, and produced a corrected theory of the art. He increased his observations on the combinations of nitrogen and oxygen; erected a eudiometer, for determining the quantity of oxygen in the air, on the new fact that nitric oxide, condensed by sulphate of iron, imbibes oxygen with more facility and regularity than any other substance; made an analysis of wavellite, a mineral from Devon, finding it to be a hydrate of alumina, or compound of water and the pure matter of clay; and, above all, advanced with unprecedented success in that wonderful career of electro-chemical research, which he had begun at Bristol, and which he never relinquished till he put himself at the head of all the contemporary chemical discoverers of Europe.

It was in 1789 that Galvani observed the startling fact that the leg of a dead frog is convulsed, as if the animal were yet alive, when a piece of metal is made to unite the muscles with the nerve of the limb. So extraordinary a thing fixed the attention of the world, and people thought the principle of life itself was about to be laid bare. Volta at once referred the phenomenon to the electricity developed by the contact of two metals; and, in order to increase by multiplication the amount of force to be eliminated in that way, he piled couples of pieces of copper and zinc one above another, wetted cloth being put between each couple. The original theory of this remarkable instrument was this: that by induction the copper pieces are thrown into a negative-electric condition, and the zinc ones into a positive state, so that when the uppermost zinc one is brought into contact, either directly or by the medium of a third body capable of conducting electricity, with the lowest copper one, there takes place a discharge similar to the detonation of a common electrical battery. The restoration of electrical equilibrium, however, is only momentary, on account of the continual new development of force by the continued contact of the metallic pieces; so that the current of a Voltaic circle is made up of an endless series of little electric shocks following each other in swift succession, like the sonorous vibrations of the air. One hand having been placed on the zinc piece at the top of this Voltaic arrangement, the instant the other hand touches the copper one at the bottom, the arms and chest sustain a convulsive shock, proportionably violent to the size of the pile. The ordinary method

of submitting minute objects to the influence of this shock is to attach a free wire to the top and another to the bottom of the instrument. As long as these wires do not come near each other the galvanism is latent. When their points are approximated so as not to touch, at a particular distance for each apparatus an electric spark passes from point to point: and if the points of the wires be inserted into mercury, water or any of many other substances called conductors, the conductor in question is submitted to a galvanic shock or current; precisely like the body of one who touches both ends of the pile at once. The effect of this current was eagerly tried upon all sorts of bodies.

In 1800 Nicholson and Carlisle, dipping these two wires into some water, were astonished to observe that oxygen was evolved at the positive pole and hydrogen at the negative one.

Ritter made the same observation, and found that if two glasses of water, connected by a bent tube full of vitriol, be employed one for each wire, the effect is not prevented. He inferred that water is a simple body, which becomes oxygen when combined with positive electricity and hydrogen when united to an equivalent proportion of negative electricity. These two kinds of electricity are imaginary absurdities invented by Dufay, who called them vitreous and resinous electricities, to render electrical phenomena intelligible. Franklin believed in only one electricity; a body being in a state of positive electricity when possessed by an excess of the fluid, and in a negative condition when deficient of that equipoised amount which he supposed to be necessary to the neutral and quiescent existence of all bodies. On so unsubstantial a foundation did Ritter build his inference.

In 1803 Hisinger and Berzelius of Sweden determined that many compound bodies are resolved into their proximate elements, when a current of galvanism is sent through them in a state of solution; and made the important generalization that acids invariably gather round the positive, and alkalis appear at the negative, wire of the pile.

So early as 1800, Davy had repeated and varied the experiment of the discoveries of this decomposing force of galvanism; and had constructed, the year after, an apparatus with two liquids and one metal: in imitation of the muscle, nerve and single metal of Galvani's accidental arrangement. After he arrived in London, and found himself the possessor of everything his heart could wish to follow this captivating new train of dynamical research, he plunged, with his wonted decision and success, into a laborious and masterly investigation of the whole scope of the subject. The greater part of his victories in this well-fought field are recorded in the Bakerian Lecture, to be found in the *Philosophical Transactions* for 1806, and the fifth volume of his collected works. He



had first to clear the ground, which had already become obstructed by certain perplexing observations. When water had been decomposed in glasses and porcelain cups, even when organic connecting matters had been discarded and the water had been distilled, there had always appeared both acid and alkaline matter at the poles. This was distracting; inasmuch as every one believed that Cavendish had demonstrated water to be a compound of oxygen and hydrogen alone. Persuaded that Cavendish was not in error, but not utterly rejecting the possibility of some unexpected decomposition of the substances of oxygen and hydrogen themselves, he calmly proceeded to rid the common experiment of every imaginable source of fallacy, and inexorably disentangled the question of its complications. In glass he traced the alkali to the potash of the vessels; and he had recourse to agate cups, united by filaments of purified asbestos. In these, too, he found alkali extracted from the stone; but less and less every succeeding time he used the same agates. This looked like the quick approach of land; and he employed the same cups again and again, in order to exhaust all the alkaline matter that was in them. But the acid and alkali, though they reached a minimum, never ceased to come, and once more the experimentalist was at sea; although he had meanwhile observed that the alkalinity of the negative water was diminished by heat. He substituted little gold cups, and found that the alkaline water in the negative cup lost its alkalinity altogether when heated. It was the volatile alkali, ammonia: and the mystery was all but out.

Distilled water absorbs a portion of nitrogen from the air, and if that portion be diminished by any secret cause of removal, the water compensates itself by withdrawing more nitrogen from the atmosphere. Again, ammonia is composed of nitrogen and hydrogen; and nitric acid of nitrogen and oxygen. Ammonia, then, appeared in the negative gold cup, where hydrogen was being eliminated; nitric acid in the positive, where oxygen was in the course of evolution: these resulting from the union of nitrogen, absorbed from without, with hydrogen and oxygen respectively. Finally, he galvanized purest water in cleanest gold in a vacuum, as well as in certain gaseous atmospheres that were free of nitrogen, and the tantalizing forms of acidity and alkalinity vanished altogether.

The essential point thus placed at rest, he confirmed the experiments of Hisinger and Berzelius; made a multitude more of his own, on the decomposition of compounds into their known ingredients; found that the insoluble, earthy and metallic salts yield to the same force; described the important part this agency must play among the masses, strata and beds of the earth, in the formation of mineral veins and deposits; and, in conclusion,

mounted to the sublime proposition that chemical affinity is nothing else than electric energy. Among masses of matter an electro-negative body repels an electro-negative one, but attracts an electro-positive substance; and Davy conceived that a particle of acid attracts and combines with a particle of alkali, the former being electro-negative, and the latter electro-positive. In virtue of the same mutual relation oxygen, which is electro-negative, unites with the metals which are electro-positive; and so on. Happily for Davy's fame, however, as a sound reasoner, he states his electro-chemical theory in such general terms that half-a-dozen modifications of it, that is, half-a-dozen electro-chemical views, which all spring from this first generalization of the relations between electrical disturbance and the decomposition of chemical compounds, have been given to the world since its publication. For example, Berzelius, Ampère and Faraday differ from each other; but equally agree with Davy, in their respective statements of the electrical theory of chemical combination. For our own parts, we accept none of them, and are of opinion that one and all mistake the contingent for the essential, while they substitute identity for partial coincidence. Meanwhile the great researches of Faraday have amazingly multiplied the data from which a more comprehensive theory of nature shall eventually be constructed. It shall never be forgotten, however, that as LAVOISIER imparted to the world the inductive element of chemistry for all time to come; and as DALTON has laid down the first principle of statics for that coming era of the science, in which the mathematical element shall be infused into its structure; so Davy has given the first impulse towards a dynamical theory of combination, composition and decomposition, in preparation for the time we thus venture to prophecy. It is curious, in connexion with this historical fraternity of Davy with DALTON, that the former did not very speedily embrace the atomic hypothesis even as a theory of definite and equimultiple proportions. Thomson relates how Davy stood out after Wollaston and he had capitulated and (to their honour be it spoken) contributed their yeoman service to the cause. He covered it with goodhumoured ridicule in the company of Davies Gilbert. The excellent Gilbert waited on Wollaston to warn him of his folly; but came away himself convinced. Davy yielded to Gilbert.

To return: Davy, ever greater in deed than in abstractive thought, and abler at contriving relentless experiments than constructing definitions, hastened to apply this great instrument of decomposition to the solution of questions of the greatest practical importance, and of vital significance to the growing science. Remember what a greedy eye he cast at Bristol upon the three bodies which had been recognized to be compound, but had not been

analyzed, in the system of Lavoisier ; and the avidity with which he had invented stratagems for dragging to light the muriatic, fluoric and boracic radicals, as they were called. It was next to impossible, however, to apply the taxis to the fluoric and muriatic acids in circumstances calculated to secure success, and we seem now to understand why the boracic one should not yield so readily to the convulsive wrench. But there were other substances in the elemental scale of the day, evidently not simple bodies, and at the same time incapable of eluding the dexterous and determined manipulation of the indomitable electro-chemist. The alkalis, alkaline earths and earths are, in fine gradation, so analogous to the metallic oxides, both in chemical and sensible characteristics, that it was not easy to avoid the suspicion that they should one day be found to resemble them in composition. Accordingly LAVOISIER, in a kind of vain oppugnancy to whom British chemists are too fond of advancing Davy's totally different claims, had distinctly announced the probability of these bodies being bases already saturated with oxygen in that very *Traité Élémentaire* which initiated his admirable disciple into the wonders of the science.

‘Il seroit possible à la rigueur que toutes les substances auxquelles nous donnons le nom de terres, ne fussent que des oxides métalliques, irréductibles par les moyens que nous employons.’\*

Again,

‘Il est à présumer que les terres cesseront bientôt d’être comptées au nombre des substances simples ; elles sont les seules de toute cette classe qui n’aient point de tendance à s’unir à l’oxygène, et je suis bien porté à croire que cette indifférence pour l’oxygène, s’il m’est permis de me servir de cette expression, tient à ce qu’elles en sont déjà saturées. Les terres, dans cette manière de voir, seroient des substances simples, peut-être des oxides métalliques oxygénés jusqu’à un certain point.’†

Once more,

‘Je n’ai point fait entrer dans ce tableau les alkalis fixes, tels que la potasse et la soude, parce que ces substances sont évidemment composées, quoiqu’on ignore cependant encore la nature des principes qui entrent dans leur combinaison.’‡

Consequently, a eulogist in the Edinburgh Review is mistaken and unjust when, in reference to the discovery about to be explained, he says that ‘no prophetic sagacity had placed it among the probabilities of science.’ Davy knew the conjecture of his master from his earliest youth, and that eye for analogies remoter

\* *Traité Élémentaire*, Tome i. 174. Paris, 1793.

‡ The same.

† Tome i. 195. Edition second

far than any so obvious as these, so keen, so true, which distinguishes him from all the chemists that have ever yet appeared, at once approved the verisimilitude of the conception.

He commenced the investigation on potash. He dissolved the alkali in water, and employed 'the highest electrical power (he) could command,' 'produced by a combination of voltaic batteries,' 'containing 24 plates of copper and zinc of twelve inches square, 100 plates of six inches, and 150 of four inches square;' but in vain. Some solid potash, now known to be a compound of true potash and water, was then melted in a platinum spoon. The spoon itself was made the positive pole of the battery; and while, with the potash it contained, it was kept red hot in a well-urged flame the negative wire was dipped into the molten alkali. He says, 'The potash appeared a conductor in a high degree, and, as long as the communication was preserved, a most intense light was exhibited at the negative wire, and a column of flame, which seemed to be owing to the development of combustible matter, arose from the point of contact.' The spoon, with its fused and glowing alkali, was next made the negative pole; the positive wire was dipped into the potash; but no 'column of flame' arose at its touch; only 'a vivid and constant light;' while, from the inside of the spoon, there rose through the potash 'aeriform globules,' like the bubbles of champagne, which burst into flame the instant they reached the air. This was the first flush of victory; but these beautiful phenomena were still susceptible of more explanations than one; and this 'combustible matter' had to be handled and examined by an Englishman, instead of merely flashing like an atomic meteor before the eye of an impotent theorist.

Solid and dry potash is a non-conductor. It requires to be fused, so as to entail the disadvantage of executing a delicate experiment at a high heat. Having found that the alkali, very slightly moistened on the surface by exposure to the atmospheric vapour, becomes a conductor; he placed a small piece upon a disc of platinum connected with the negative side of a 'battery of 250 of six and four in a state of intense activity.' Whenever the positive wire was brought round and its point laid, like the tip of a magic wand, on the top of the potash, the solid alkali began to fuse at both its points of 'electrization.' 'There was a violent effervescence at the upper surface; at the lower or negative surface there was no liberation of elastic fluid, but small globules, having a high metallic lustre, and being precisely similar in visible characters to quicksilver, appeared, some of which burst with explosion and bright flame, as soon as they were formed, and others remained, and were merely tarnished, and finally covered by a white film, which formed on their surface.'

This was the sixth of October, 1807: how memorable a day!

His assistant relates, that 'he could not contain his joy,' but 'bounded about the room,' in an ecstasy of delight. It was not alone that some paltry potash had been decomposed by his hand into oxygen and a new metallic substance: but the theory of chemistry was justified and enlarged; the decomposition of soda, lime, barytes, strontian, magnesia and alumina, would soon be forced to follow, as indeed they were; a new reactive power, so potent, as to remind him of the universal solvent of the alchymist, was almost within his grasp, with which he might decompose silica and boracic acid, as they were eventually decomposed, if not edulcorate the muriatic and fluoric radicals; in fine, for the present, the analogy of harmonious nature was magnified, and for the future, might not the very metals, royal ones and all, be compelled, by this pile of Volta, to unroll themselves before the world into thin hydrogenous air and some one unknown constituent? AND ALL BY HIM! It was a glorious day of prophecy and power.

There was still much to do. It was necessary to procure the new body in larger quantities; to examine its curious properties and proportions; to render it evident that its origin had no connexion with the platinum apparatus; to prove that nothing but oxygen resulted along with it from the galvanic action on potash; to show that potash, and only potash, is reproduced by the combination of the new substance with oxygen: and there were difficulties of no ordinary magnitude in the way. The necessity of moistening the potash gave occasion to some, whom it is better not to perpetuate, to maintain that the new body was a compound of hydrogen and potash; while the entry of water into the chemical constitution of potash rendered the first specimens of potassium (for such was the name affixed to the metal) more or less charged with hydrogen. But the labours of the discoverer; and of Gay-Lussac, who invented a reactive process for the purer preparation of the substance; soon disentangled the matter, and made the natural history of both potassium and the metal of soda, which was discovered by Davy a few days after that of potash, as clear as day.

Potassium is a soft silver-white metal, that melts at  $136^{\circ}$ , can be distilled at a low red heat, and kindles in the air at the temperature where it begins to vaporize. Klaproth, Dalton and others objected to its being called a metal, on the score of its levity. The judgment of chemists has, however, been decisive that its other metallic qualities entitle it to the rank it claims. There should be an end to all such disputes. The number of the elements is not a formally graduated scale running up and down, but an interwoven piece of work in which there is no transition but by a kind of flow; although many of the parts are

still invisible, and there accordingly appear to be interruptions and divisions to the unexpectant eye. Metal or not metal, in the dry air it quickly combines with oxygen, and is soon covered with a white rust. This oxide is potassa. Potassa attracts the aqueous vapour of the atmosphere and becomes potash; which draws down more and more moisture, till the original bright bead have become a little pool of alkali dissolved in water. This solution combines rapidly with the carbonic acid of the air and, if it be subsequently boiled to dryness, there is left the carbonate of potash; the pearl-ash of the housewife.

Potassium is lighter than water. It breaks into flame the moment it touches water or ice. If plunged under water there is no combustion, but hydrogen is discharged with turbulence and resistlessness. These remarkable, but far from anomalous, properties suggested to the teeming mind of the electro-chemist the conjecture that the solid body of the world is composed of potassium and the metals that resemble it; and that volcanic eruptions are produced by the occasional incursion of the waters of the deep, or of the great mountain tanks, on the still domain of these atlantic metals. The far greater part of the investigated crust of the earth is certainly composed of such oxidated metals, and the specific gravity of the whole globe is supposed to be less than that of even the rocks; so that it is at least possible that there may be more of sound prediction in this sublime conception than the majority are inclined to think.

In the most serio-comical connexion with the memoir of 1806, out of which all these great discoveries arose, the prostrate Dr. Paris exclaims with the naïveté of a boy: ‘a great poetic genius has said, “If Davy had not been the first chemist, he would have been the first poet of his age.” Upon this question I do not feel myself a competent judge: but where is the modern Esau who would exchange his Bakerian lecture for a poem, though it should equal in design and execution the *Paradise Lost*!’ We should certainly not have alluded to this amusing escapade, but that Davy himself all along cherished the opinion, which is more common than enthusiasm in their own pursuits among men of science, that the principal, if not the only aim, of poetry is to amuse; the function of science or, as it is more ordinarily misnamed, philosophy being to instruct mankind. They do not discriminate between knowledge and wisdom; nor know, alas for them! that it is goodness and harmony the poet is sent into the world to teach. Far from enviable, indeed, is he who can rise from the thoughtful study of an original investigation into nature, like this of Davy’s, without the thankful, though diffident and tremulous hope, that he is a wiser and a better man for the perusal; but surely the student who finds only amusement and

delicious titillation of his sensibilities, in a book of *Iliads*, a *Divina Commedia*, an *Othello*, a *Paradise Lost*, or even a *Dream of Mary in Heaven*, has yet to imbibe the primitive and the nobler elements of humanity. Differently from Paris does Coleridge, the true admirer of Davy and himself a poet, adjudge the relationship of kind between the august fraternity of Milton and that humbler guild of which his gifted friend was at once the ornament and the master: 'If in Shakspeare we find nature idealized into poetry, through the creative power of a profound yet observant meditation, so through the meditative observation of a Davy, a Wollaston or a Hatchett;

—————By some connatural force,  
Powerful at greatest distance to unite  
With secret amity, things of like kind,

we find poetry, as it were, substantiated and realized in nature—yea, nature itself disclosed to us, *geminam istam naturam, quæ fit et facit, et creat et creatur*, as at once the poet and the poem!"\*

A word about Davy's own poetry, for there will not be another opportunity, so much is there to say about his natural work. Too much has been made of it by his brother, Paris, Cuvier and certain anonymous writers; for the reported conversational observations of Southey and Coleridge are negative, and refer only to what in their opinion he might have been in literature, if he had not assumed the warfare for which alone, in our opinion, he was intended and accoutred. Now, in such of his versified effusions as have been published, we are able to descry little humanity; beyond the love of glory, and the most ordinary, if not inferior attachment to home. Then the writer appears to love even nature solely as nature ministering to discovery; and he imitates her mechanical emotions alone. Not only does he never sob as his mother must have sobbed; but he never sighs, nor heaves, nor pants, nor in fury rages, like the sea. For a spontaneous bard, never yet was wight so curbed, so straining to be great, so turgid and, in one fatal word or two, so artificial and scientific. You listen for the murmur of his natal stream, the Boye, or the wave and hush-again of the ever-haunted woods, or the carol of singing birds, in vain. Follow his devious and eager footstep to the rugged beach, and his verse will never mew and heavily stagger, as if in pain, like the plovers on the way; nor shriek in the wind like the sea-fowl, that deafen the eaves-dropping air around his dreamy head. Nay, aspiring though he ever was, and confident as a full-fledged falcon in his undazzled strength

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\* The Friend, vol. 3, Essay vi.

of sweep and eye, neither in his poetry, nor in any of his poetical fictions on the physical theory of a future state, given in the *Consolations in Travel*, does he ever soar towards 'the highest heaven of invention,' bearing the awe-struck reader in sudden triumph to the sky. He lifts himself aloft like a crag, that warms and glitters only in the sun.

' By the orient gleam  
Whitening the foam of the blue wave, that breaks  
Around his granite feet, but dimly seen,  
Majestic Michael rises ; he whose brow  
Is crown'd with castles, and whose rocky sides  
Are clad with dusky ivy ; he whose base,  
Beat by the storm of ages, stands unmoved  
Amidst the wreck of things, the change of time.'

In reality, with the temperament and the talents of a considerable poet, he was, from the very beginning of his intellectual career, too forward in the conscious pursuit of acquaintance with the particular parts of nature to be the poet of her secret heart. His was a constant sense of antagonism to creation ; and, though it was the antagonism of a brother's love devout, yet it was a brother's, and ever too solicitous of displaying her capabilities and varied resources. Accordingly, his muse was neither an ever-revealing, ever-withdrawing shape of pale celestial beauty, like the Beatrice of Dante ; nor a pulsing form of kindly flesh and blood like the Eve of Milton ; but a hard automaton of brilliant metals, precious stones and clay, himself her Frankenstein, and the glow in her mimic bosom a chemical combustion.

' Hence, she scorn'd  
The narrow laws of custom that control  
Her feeble sex. Great in her energies,  
She roam'd the fields of Nature, scann'd the laws  
That move the ruling atoms, changing still,  
Still rising into life. Her eagle eye,  
Piercing the blue immensity of space,  
Held converse with the lucid sons of Heaven,  
The day-stars of creation, or pursued  
The dusky planets rolling round the sun,  
And drinking in his radiance, light and life.  
Such was the maiden !'

No, we do not think Davy was a poet ; these descriptions of St. Michael's cliff and the lady Theora are not poetic ; and it is undeniable that he has not penned a single verse the world does not very 'willingly let die.' His sphere and the proper home of his mind was the laboratory. His work and the proper delight of his heart was discovery. There he never faltered. From his last successful toils he pressed forward to fresh investigations. After



several somewhat less satisfactory experiments upon the elemental radical of boracic acid, his next important inquiry was into the relations of chlorine to muriatic acid. This green and pungent air Scheele discovered in 1774. In consonance with the doctrine of STAHL he named it dephlogisticated marine acid, and believed it to be a simple body. Berthollet, however, under the influence of the Lavoisierian theory, reversed this correct and simple view of its nature, and did for it exactly what the Stahlins had done for the metals. Chlorine results from the action of muriatic acid upon peroxide of manganese, there being nothing else produced but what was called muriate of the protoxide of that metal; that is, a part of the oxygen of the peroxide had to be accounted for, and Berthollet inferred that it had combined with the free muriatic acid so as to produce chlorine or, according to his nomenclature, oxymuriatic acid. Muriatic acid itself, as has already been hinted, was classified by Lavoisier as an oxide of some unknown base, to be named for the time the muriatic radical. Gay-Lussac and Thenard published a notice of some experiments in 1809, which subsequently appeared at length in their *Physico-Chemical Researches*, in which they pointed out that oxymuriatic acid may quite as well be considered a simple body; but they continued to give the preference to the doctrine of Berthollet. It appeared to be necessary for the integrity of the French theory of Chemistry, that no acid substance should be by any means permitted not to contain oxygen, the acidifying principle of nature; and Cuvier hints that the physico-chemical researchers dared not run counter to the persuasion of their countrymen. It was accordingly reserved for Davy, with his battery, unshackled thought and decisive experimentation, to demonstrate that muriatic acid is composed of hydrogen and oxymuriatic acid, instead of muriatic acid and oxygen being the ingredients of oxymuriatic acid: that the green air or chlorine, as he called it, is as elementary a form of matter as oxygen itself: and that, consequently, the theory and terminology of a large department of chemical facts must be completely changed. Berzelius was at first averse to the Davian view, and Murray of Edinburgh waged a puny warfare in favour of that of Berthollet; but the exposition of the beautiful analogies to chlorine presented by iodine, an indecomposable substance accidentally discovered in 1812; and the discovery of bromine, another body of the same order, by Balard in 1826, soon combined to establish the truth. It is interesting to know that the reformer entered on this inquiry in the hope of decomposing oxymuriatic acid, and extracting oxygen from the muriatic; but he bowed to the authority of nature, though it reversed his expectation.

This achievement has been loudly vaunted, especially by his

own countrymen, as a victory over LAVOISIER. It was no such thing. It made known a multitude of facts, of which that great lawgiver of the science was ignorant; but they arrayed themselves under his theory, as naturally as the particles of a chemical solution round an enlarging nucleus of crystallization. LAVOISIER and his followers put the appellation of oxygen upon the dephlogisticated air of Priestley, because it was an ingredient of all the acids the composition of which had been ascertained; and they were bound to infer that the muriatic acid, not then methodically decomposed, contained it too. It was not named oxygen because of any peculiar, inherent and inseparable relation to the property of acidity; for it was known to be a common and invariable constituent of those metallic oxides, which were recognized to be the proper antitheses in idea to the acids; and, as has been intimated already, LAVOISIER himself descried the probability of its being yet found to be the invariable and common ingredient of the alkalis and earths, the conjecture which Davy has so admirably realized. Every chemist is aware, moreover, that it is not the so-called muriatic, hydriodic and hydrobromic acids that are the real acids after all, (if there be any meaning in the word whatever) but chlorine, iodine and bromine, the salt-radicals of these compounds. So much did chemists, for one example Dr. Turner, unconsciously feel the force of this that, when it was found that solutions in water of muriates of the oxides of metals evaporated to dryness leave only compounds of chlorine with the metals, the hydrogen of the muriatic acid having produced water with the oxygen of the metallic oxide and been dissipated by the heat, there arose the question whether the chloride of a metal becomes the muriate of its oxide when re-dissolved in water. Thanks to Liebig and what is called the sulphatoxygen theory of saline constitution, such aimless considerations are, it is to be hoped, forever in abeyance. At all events we rejoice, heart and hand, to coincide with the indignant Dumas in the reiterated assertion that LAVOISIER is yet intact: for we love, more than any other thing, to see man's discovery of Nature harmoniously opening out and lifting its shady head like a tree; the names of the hama-dryads, who have forced the juices to ascend, meanwhile murmuring without a jar among the leaves. 'They have often told you that the theory of LAVOISIER is modified, is overthrown. It is an error, Gentlemen, an error! no, that is not true! LAVOISIER is intact, impenetrable, his armour of steel is nowhere beaten in.'\*

By this unrivalled series of practical discoveries Davy acquired

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\* 7th May 1836. Leçons sur la Philosophie Chimique, professées au Collège de France.

such a reputation for success among his countrymen that his aid was invoked on every great occasion. In 1812 there took place so dreadful a detonation of fire-damp, within a coal-mine in the north of England, that it destroyed more than a hundred miners at a blow. A committee of the proprietors besought our chemist to provide a method of preparing for such tremendous visitations : **AND HE DID IT.** Still more is it to his honour that he was himself the means of introducing the safety-lamp into the mines of Hungary, personally overseeing its construction and directing its employment. In truth, none of his victories seems to have afforded him so much heartfelt satisfaction. In reporting this beautiful invention to the Royal Society, he says :— ‘ I shall now conclude. Whatever may be the fate of the speculative part of this inquiry, I have no anxiety as to the practical results, or as to the unimpassioned and permanent judgment of the public on the manner in which they have been developed and communicated ; and no fear that an invention for the preservation of human life and the diminution of human misery, will be neglected or forgotten by posterity.’ ‘ I value it,’ he used to say with the kindest exultation, ‘ more than anything I ever did : it was the result of a great deal of investigation and labour ; but if my directions be attended to, it will save the lives of thousands of poor men.’ How gladly we should have taken down and put reverently up again the simple mechanism of this exquisite device, if our allotted space had admitted of more particular expatiation ; this device which has eluded, with the subtlety of a kindly genie, a sublime and gigantic evil that could not otherwise be braved but with despair ; this device which, working like the warning ring of Haroun Alraschid, has protected a multitude of intrepid workmen from instant destruction ; this device which gladdened the philanthropic spirit from which it sprang, ‘ more than anything (he) ever did !’ Posterity will be grateful for these generous words ; for

He, who works me good with unmoved face,  
Does it but half. He chills me, while he aids,—  
My benefactor, not my brother man.

In 1823 the Admiralty requested him to prevent the sea from corroding the copper-sheathing of the British navy ; and he hastened to apply those principles of electro-chemical induction, which he had so main a share in bringing to light, and that with complete success, so far as the mere chemical preservation was concerned. Nor can there be any doubt that, but for the endeavour to thwart and disconcert his plans on the part of invidious men, his labours would not have terminated till every incidental objection should have been conquered or evaded.

Some years before, he had been engaged in unrolling the manuscripts of Herculaneum; but the conservators at Naples, though they thanked him for his suggestions, soon threw impediments in the way of prosecuting the undertaking. The opportunity, however, was seized of examining the colours used by the ancients, as found on the walls of Pompeii and Herculaneum, and the results were duly recorded in the *Philosophical Transactions*. It is unnecessary, however, to analyse any or all of these his unceasing and, as it were, supernumerary labours; for every European student of chemistry is a student of the works of Davy, and the general reader cannot be supposed to accord enough of interest to the consideration of scientific details, not more deeply related to the progress of human investigation into the theory of nature.

We have not followed his private fortunes further than his union with the Royal Institution; because our interest is always concentrated on the struggle of life, while Davy so early shone in the eye of the world, and was by nature so much more than equal to the kind of researches he undertook, that he needs not be looked back upon as one of those heroic spirits whose whole careers have been, like the lives of Columbus, Galileo and Kepler, but 'a battle and a march' from end to end. Honours were showered upon him. A fellow of the Royal Society at five-and-twenty, he was elected a secretary at twenty-nine. For his Bakerian lecture he received Napoleon's prize for the advancement of Galvanic researches from the French Institute, at a time when national hostilities were at their height. In his three-and-thirtieth year Trinity College of Dublin created him a doctor of laws and, the year after this academical distinction, he received what is called the honour of knighthood from the hand of George IV., who had just entered on his regency as Prince of Wales. He was proud of it, because it had been worn by Newton. A day or two thereafter, having first resigned his professorship in the Institution, he married Mrs. Appreece, the rich widow of a diplomatist; a lady remarkable for intelligence and activity of mind. A few years later, the invention of the safety-lamp brought him the public gratitude of the united colliers of Whitehaven, of the coal proprietors of the north of England, of the grand jury of Durham, of the chamber of commerce at Mons, of the coal miners of Flanders; and, above all, of the coal owners of the Wear and the Tyne, who presented him (it was his own choice) with a dinner service of plate, worth £2500. On the same occasion Alexander, the Emperor of all the Russias, sent him a vase with a letter of commendation; and the Royal Society of his own country bestowed on him their biennial medal. In 1817 he was elected to the dignity of an associate of the Institute of France. Next year, at the age

of forty, he was created a baronet; but he was never so happy as to produce an heir to the title. At length, in 1820, he was elevated by a large majority to the presidency of the Royal Society of London; an honorary and laborious office, which he filled, with somewhat more pomp and pride than was either necessary or becoming, till he resigned it in 1827.

Out of a life of so many labours and so many honours few men could have contrived to distil so many pleasures. Fond of travel, geology and sport he seems to have visited, for the purposes of mineralogy and the angle, almost every county of England and Wales. In the summer of 1804, when little more than the brilliant professor at the Royal Institution of Great Britain, he was in Scotland and among the Western Islands. The following season he made a descent on the north of Ireland, for the purpose of examining the basaltic formations of the coast. In 1806 he was again in Ireland, from June to October. Six years after this he undertook a tour of pleasure in Scotland with Lady Davy after their marriage, leaving London in July, purposing to return in December, but getting back by the end of October. He was provided with a portable laboratory; that he might experiment when he chose, as well as fish and shoot, 'which he almost as much delighted in,' according to the testimony of Dr. Davy. In November of the same year he was at Tunbridge, and there his eye was damaged by an experiment on the explosive chloride of nitrogen. The following year, 1813, he obtained permission from the French Government to visit the continent; left London in October; and spent two months in Paris, where he was received with signal politeness and eclat, forming the acquaintance of almost every remarkable person in that concentrated metropolis. Proceeding to Rome, Naples and Milan, where he saw Volta, the godsire of his principal discoveries, he went round to Geneva and resided there from June till September, when he returned to winter at Rome; and next spring, returning through part of Germany, he reached London again in April 1815. Between this date and the same month in 1818, he made several journeys to the north of England and Scotland, partly in connexion with his inquiries into the chemistry and natural history of fire-damp, but chiefly, it would appear, for the sake of his favourite sports. In one of his Scottish runs he went to Orkney. In May 1818, he proceeded a second time to the continent, visiting Austrian Flanders, Germany, Austria, Hungary, Illyria, Carinthia, Carniola, Istria; and reaching Rome in October, whence he soon hastened to Naples, in order to unroll the Herculanean manuscripts. After residing at the baths of Lucca and elsewhere, he was once more in England in the June of 1820; and away to the lowland Scottish moors in ever

welcome August. It was this autumn he visited Sir Walter Scott at Abbotsford, and wetted his line in the Tweed. Having become the president of the Royal Society in November 1820, as soon as the duties of the session were over, he betook himself to Ireland, he says himself, for sport in the Bush and the Bahn; and then to the west of Scotland, it is presumed, for grouse. At last, in winter, he found himself once more at Mount's Bay, the scene of his boyhood, and wrote to Poole, 'an uncontrollable necessity has brought me here.' At Penzance they received our baronet and president with every public honour. He stayed a week and more among them. Next summer and autumn away again to fish and shoot among the distant Highlands of Scotland; his lady not appearing to have accompanied him very much in his travels after their return from their first residence upon the Continent. The following season he went to Ireland and Scotland with Wollaston, whom he seems to have infected with as fond a love of angling as his own. In the summer of 1824 he coasted Norway, and travelled in Sweden, Denmark, Holstein and Hanover; visiting crown princes and philosophers; fishing in strange northern lakes and rivers; shooting snipes; eating capital dinners, every item of more than one of which is registered by him, and published by his brother with becoming enthusiasm and gratitude; and storing up, for the use of his friends and the British public at large, certain culinary hints concerning cucumbers and the roasting of fowls with parsley in their bellies. The wines they gave him to drink in those ungenial but hospitable climes were good! Yes, the baronet had a taste in wines: the president was a gourmet. It was a safer and even a more aristocratic way of escape than almost any other for that superfluous steam of animality which is, indeed an inferior, but yet a very frequent excess in the constitution of the man of prowess. Almost every great man is a voluptuary by nature. Even Newton smoked himself into a state of absolute titillation. Your true consumers of tobacco, your genuine gourmets, your consummate lovers of wine, your most absolute of gallants, and your only sufferable opium-eaters are such men of genius as really do toil like heroes when they are at work. Doubtless, men of genius are endued with the most sensitive and quivering of corporeal frames; and, if their characters be at the same time strong and vigorous, that swiftly responsive constitution to the play of every sensuous delight is invariably accompanied by the fiercest manifestations of turbulent human passion; and these are the chief ingredients of the less brutish man of vice. Then there is as little doubt that the alternation of activity among all the elements, which constitute a man complete, furnish the best conditions for the full activity of each of them in succession. The mind, which is overstrained, instinctively seeks and finds its natural repose in the pleasures of sensation; and the weakened

sense aspires to hide itself in the kindlier bosom of emotion ; whence the intellect springs up anew in renovated strength. Happily for the world, the great leaders of its spiritual history have been for the most part men of principle and wisdom, who have known the blessed art of guiding these irrepressible outbursts of their earth-born characters into the beautiful and fertilizing channels of virtue. Happy the man of capacious intensity who, in the midst of temptations like those that surrounded Davy from first to last, succeeds in living so well as never once to call a blush upon the face of purity ; for such an one can well afford to tolerate the smile of affectionate criticism regarding the ludicrous pleasures of the table. But happier he whom, with the highest work to do and ability to do it in the highest spirit, Providence shall early withdraw from the fascinations of the world into some sweet and solemn seclusion where, away from both the promotions and the hindrances of such inconstant men as easily extol and straightway too easily fall into censure ; in the exhilarating and wholesome company of a quiet few, who love him for the heart that warms his unwearied brain ; surrounded only by the simplest pleasures, and these the lawful dalliances of his human nature ; and interrupted only by the weekly sabbath of creation, he might spend his unambitious days in the serener toils of investigation, destined not only to enrich but to ennoble the general mind of humanity for every century to come, long after his indifferent name shall be more than mythic, or even be pronounced at all : as the continental river, covering many a gorgeous plain with wealth and beauty as it rolls its waters to the ocean, whence they originally arose, owes its skyey sources to the homely solitudes of some mountain range. Not unlike this ideal would have been the even tenor of time-honoured DALTON, had he not been held to the ground in the cold gripe of poverty almost all his generous days. Amid influences somewhat like these did Bacon end his busy years, and execute his full-orbed works on methodology ; having, by the light that shone inextinguishably within him, transformed the rural prison-home, to which he was banished by the sapient king of Great Britain and Ireland, into a true and long-resounding oracle of the omniscient God of nature. Similar were the propitious fortunes that followed the remote and indefatigable footsteps of Herschel ; all honour to the considerate bounty of George the Third. But above all, not far from such was the tainted life of Newton, awful shade !

Sir Humphry had soon to undertake travels of a more sacred character, and of the most momentous consequences to himself and the world. 'Whatever burns consumes...ashes remain.' From the period of his excellent mother's death, in September 1826, his vigour had declined. Pain and numbness invaded his right limbs, and his strong heart began to flutter.

His last oration before the Royal Society was delivered on St. Andrew's day in 1826, with painful exertion, as if he were about to be stricken down by apoplexy. The skill of his friend Dr. Babington did little for him; but he rallied, and early in 1827 he was able to withdraw to the Continent from the toils and annoyances of office. It was an inclement season; but he arrived at Ravenna by the 20th of February, where an accomplished young vice-legate did all 'he could have done for a brother.' 'I have chosen this spot of the declining empire of Rome,' he wrote, 'as one of solitude and repose...I ride in the pine forest, which is the most magnificent in Europe...The pine wood partly covers the spot where the Roman fleet once rode. Such is the change of time!' Here his brother, who had attended, left him. He was as diligent as his strength would permit in taking exercise on horseback, among the avenues of Pineta and the marshes of La Classe, with his gun and his dogs; amused himself by reading; penned 'Hints and Experiments in Physical Science,' for he experimented to the very last; wrote reflections on life, full of experience, both in verse and prose; and engaged his powerful mind with contemplations of a higher order still.

We cannot follow him closely in the weary track that eventually led this conqueror of the elements out of nature; the subject and the sphere of all his victories. It was a sore struggle. Throughout his journals there are scattered exclamations of *valde miserabilis*. Poor Davy! with none but servile hands to tend him; no one to lean upon in the hour of weakness; homeless and alone; he wandered bravely on in voluntary pilgrimage to shrine of sequestered beauty after shrine, avoiding the interference of physicians, taking counsel of his own heart, and sporting like a naturalist when he could, from April to October: when he returned to London, the arena of his glory, for the last time, 'neither decidedly better nor worse.' Unfit for the excitements and the cares of society, as well as for the active labours of research, he wished to buy some warm-lying, beautiful estate, happily situated for the rural sports he followed with unabated zeal. There, gazing with a fond proprietary sense upon the landscape, watching the weather and the varying year with the eye of a genuine naturalist, deceiving the finny people with the quaint solicitude of another Walton, and looking back with triumphant sighs upon his exulting life; his life would have cooed away. It was not to be so. His wishes were not met; his health would not improve; and he longed for his South Austrian solitudes again. Bidding farewell to London at the end of March the following spring, he spent the summer as he had spent the last; and then withdrew from the sublime Styrian haunts, which he loved so truly, to reside once more in Rome.



In this premature winter of the year of his life the Discoverer turned, with the trusting love of a child, for solace in the summery bosom of nature. 'Nature never deceives us'...is his plaint... 'The rocks, the mountains, the streams, always speak the same language...Her fruits are all balmy, bright and sweet; she affords none of these blighted ones so common in the life of man, and so like the fabled apples of the Dead Sea, fresh and beautiful to the sight, but, when tasted, full of bitterness and ashes.' Davy too, the brilliant and successful, had been encountered by disappointment, the entailed inheritance of human nature. His whole life was calculated to work him up to an exorbitant pitch of expectation. He was never very well fitted by nature, and totally unfitted by experience, for misfortunes. It is well for the world that his early path was easy and open, for success and applause were the necessary stimulus of so sanguine and sympathetic a being. Accordingly, when, after all that he had done and enjoyed, they endeavoured to rob him of the dearer honour of his invention of the Safety-Lamp by a base and ignorant cabal, fomented by men whom, now that the question is for ever put contemptuously at rest, it were too much honour ever to name again, there is no wonder that he was deeply wounded by the insult. Then the impediments that were thrown in the way of the thorough investigation of the copper-sheathing question by certain underlings of office, for the weightiest and most selfish of purposes, and the taunts that were invidiously bandied about concerning the apparent failure of his admirable plan for protection, vexed and filled him with just indignation. We men are cruel usurers; for if a man, making himself over to us for better for worse, half-accomplish a difficult discovery in our behoof, we immediately hoot him for his unneighbourly bravery in attacking so impregnable a stronghold, and persecute him into solitude, because his victory is not complete: and so we abandon him to complete it by himself! Not that this of Davy's, vexatious though it was, is an instance very strongly in point; yet it serves for illustration, while it must have stung a man of his unfailing resources and invincible success to the very quick. Nor was Sir Humphry happy in his elevation to the chair of the Royal Society; except in the profaned consideration that it was once the Chair of NEWTON, profaned by the unavoidable remembrance of the intermediate nonentities that had occupied the sacred seat. We are incompetent to the discussion of this question; but it is clear that his administration was far from giving satisfaction. The responsibility of every disagreeable thing that transpired in the private transactions of the Society was thrown on him. He was annoyed by a hundred impertinent trifles. Above all, he was disappointed in his life-long foolish hope, of one day moving the Government of

Britain to patronize the cause of science. Things did not go so sweetly with him as they did in the rising and ascent of his climbing sun. Other sorrows he may have suffered; others he did, although we cannot well say what. But to a spirit of such inexhaustible activity, it was sorrow enough to feel that cold, slimy and relentless clutch of palsy, creeping slowly over him; the palm upon his heart, and the chilly fingers over his limbs, to squeeze him leisurely to death.

It was at Rome on the 20th of February, when he was finishing the Last days of a Philosopher, that he received the final warning to prepare. By dictation he wrote to his brother, who was at Malta with the British troops, 'I am dying from a severe attack of palsy, which has seized the whole of the body, with the exception of the intellectual organ...I shall leave my bones in the Eternal City.' But he was to die neither then nor there. Within three weeks his brother was by his bed-side; and found him as much interested in the anatomy and electricity of the torpedo as ever, though he bade Dr. Davy 'not be grieved' by his approaching dissolution. Yet after a day of 150 pulse-beats, and only five breathings, in a minute, and of the most distressing particular symptoms, he again revived. Shortly after this Lady Davy arrived at Rome from England, with a copy of the second edition of *Salmonia*, which he received with peculiar pleasure. After some weeks of melancholy dalliance with the balmy spring air of the Campagna, the Albula Lake, the hills of Tivoli and the banks of the Tiber, they travelled quietly round by Florence, Genoa, Turin, slowly threading the flowery sweet-scented alpine valleys, to Geneva: WHERE HE SUDDENLY EXPIRED. It was three hours beyond midnight: his servant called his brother: his brother was in time to close his eyes. It was the 29th of May in 1829.

They buried him at Geneva. In truth Geneva buried him herself, with serious and respectful ceremonial. A simple monument stands at the head of the hospitable grave. There is a tablet to his memory on the walls of Westminster Abbey. There is a monument at Penzance. His public services of plate, his imperial vases, his foreign prizes, his royal medals, shall be handed down with triumph to his collateral posterity, as trophies won from the deeps of nescience. But his WORK; designed by his own genius; executed by his own hand, tracery and all; and every single stone signalized by his own private mark, indelible, characteristic and inimitable; HIS WORK is the only adequate record of his name. How deeply are its foundations rooted in space, and how lasting its materials for time! It is solid, yet its substantial utility is almost everywhere flowered into beauty. It is mingled in its style, but it is unique. It is the tomb, not of the palsy-stricken body, which has returned to the dust as it

was, but of the empyreal soul that is with God who gave it, so that the erection knows no place, and can be assimilated to our conceptions only by the figures of fancy and imagination.

The monumental fane, then, which this great investigator has raised in honour of nature, for the benefit of man and to his own glory, is not a camera-obscura, like the Work without a Parallel of old Beccher, or the Foundations of Chemistry by STAHL; in which the figures are but dim and upside-down, though lying luminous and beautiful in the midst of the surrounding darkness: nor yet a camera-lucida, like the faultless work of his coteremporary Wollaston; where the images are almost painfully distinct, minute and suffused with the light of day. It is not a crystal edifice, like the palace of ice upon the Neva, as is the system of LAVOISIER; not yet dissolved by the glowing and ascending year: nor a mosque, like the heretical but prophetic Chemical Statics of the metaphysical Berthollet; in which it will ere long be manifest that 'more is meant than meets the eye.' It is not a European museum, like the substantial fabric which the long day's work of Berzelius has slowly builded over his future bed of rest, and filled with all that is rich and rare from Icelandic cauldrons, Ural mines, Tropical woods, and the heights of Andes and the Himmaleh, for the useful instruction of mankind: nor a half-lit, unfinished but magnificent orrery, like the New Philosophy of DALTON, in which, when the undiscovered planets and the unexpected comets shall have been found, and when the central idea shall have been kindled into a blaze of light and force by the Prometheus of another day, the movements and the sheen of all the stars shall be held up to the astonished eye as one completed microcosm of creation. Yet there is something of all these together in the work of the London Discoverer. There are the neighbouring shadows of STAHL, and, as it appears from the researches of Faraday, something also like the inverted representation of the truth. There is the brightness of Wollaston, in the great facts he has won from their enchanted holds. There is the sound logic, if not the translucent conception, of LAVOISIER. There is the breadth, if not the subtlety, of Berthollet. There is the wealth, both of matter and resources, without the infallible accuracy of Berzelius. And, last of all, there is the independence, and the essential vitality of glorious promise for posterity, of our own immortal DALTON: but over the great proportions of the fabric there is shed that brilliancy which is all his own, a lustre partly derived from the accidental character of his particular discoveries, and partly from the original endowment of his mind, by that only Potentate, whose 'minister he was.' Such is the elaborate and richly laden mausoleum of HUMPHRY DAVY.

ART. III.—*Lectures delivered at Broadmead Chapel, Bristol.* By JOHN FOSTER. London, 1844. 8vo, pp. 419.

ALTHOUGH the editor of this volume does not announce a Memoir of the late John Foster, we assume it as probable that something of the sort is in preparation. His correspondence was, we believe, at one time extensive, and his letters were often, if not in the usual sense of the word, elaborate, yet of that leisurely and copious sort which unfolds the mind—the soul of the writer, and supplies a most desirable commentary upon his published works. These letters are, no doubt, accessible; for who of Foster's correspondents has not carefully preserved such letters? or who would not be prompt to grant them to an authorized editor? and, whatever subjects they may bear upon, they will furnish such a "memoir of himself," by a man's own pen, as does not appear twice in long periods of time.

In the prospect and full confidence of the appearing of such a volume, we shall, in this instance, hold ourselves back from the themes which would naturally present themselves in taking up a posthumous work of the author of the "Essays." Besides, these Lectures would not afford the requisite text and illustration for an essay on the mind and writings of this distinguished man: not indeed that they do not indicate its characteristic powers, or well consist with the reputation which these have obtained for him; nevertheless, they are not precisely of the same quality as his elaborated productions; and they rather show what the man might do when he pleased, than exhibit him in the full play of his great powers of mind.

The editor is judiciously careful to preclude any misconception as to the literary value of the "Lectures;" and it may be well to cite what he says on this subject.

"The Lectures," he tells us, "contained in this volume, were not prepared for the press by the author. In the year 1822, Mr. Foster, in compliance with the earnest request of some intimate friends, commenced the delivery of the lectures, from which the following are selected, once every fortnight, (the months of July and August excepted,) and continued them, though latterly at longer intervals, till the close of 1825. His auditory consisted of persons belonging to various religious communities in Bristol, most of whom had long known and appreciated his writings. With such a class of hearers, Mr. Foster felt himself warranted to take a wider range of subjects, and to adopt a more varied and elaborate style of illustration than in addressing a promiscuous congregation. All the leading ideas of each

discourse were committed to paper, with occasional hints for amplification, filling generally twelve or fourteen quarto pages. Various marks were adopted to guide the elocution, as may be seen in the very accurate fac-simile given of a part of the fifteenth lecture.

"Though it is certainly to be regretted that the volume was not prepared for the press by Mr. Foster, yet the above statement will moderate this feeling, and serve to show that its contents are very far from being hasty sketches, or meagre outlines. The editor would be sorry to raise unfounded expectations; but he has not used the term 'notes,' or any similar one, in the title, from the belief that it would be doing injustice to these invaluable memorials of his revered friend. What they might have been after being subjected to the author's revision, he has in some measure been able to ascertain, from comparing the original manuscript of a lecture on Heb. xi., 6, 'He that cometh to God, must believe that he is,' &c., with the same, as published by the Religious Tract Society, under the title of, 'How to find access to God.' Many paragraphs (indeed the bulk of them) are identical, and the additional matter, chiefly by way of amplification, amounts to about one-fifth.

"The present volume has been printed from copies of the Lectures which have been carefully collated with the original manuscripts. The editor's chief attention has been directed to arranging the sentences in paragraphs, with the appropriate punctuation. It has also been found necessary to supply here and there a word or two, (often merely a connective particle,) such as must, in many instances, have been used in the delivery, but omitted, for brevity's sake, in writing. Many pages, however, occur without any additions of this kind: in three of the Lectures, (the 6th, 7th, and 8th,) they average at about five words in a page. It need scarcely be said that nothing in the shape of alteration or correction has been attempted.

"With respect to the arrangement, the order of time has generally been observed, which is indicated by the dates, as far as they could be ascertained."—PREFACE.

The Lectures, in fact, indicate throughout what is here stated by Dr. Riland. Crude they are not; but neither are they wrought up in the manner which was characteristic of the author. With Foster, elaboration was not a process of polishing and trimming, and setting things off to the best advantage; nor was it a soldering on of decorations, nor a splicing of clever after-thoughts: it was not this; but something analogous to a severe chemical process, in the course of which every element and particle, foreign to the one element proposed at the first to be educed, is cast forth: it was a method of "exhaustions," as mathematicians would say; not of accumulations: not but what this very process might imply, often, an apparently encumbered structure of paragraphs; but it did so only when, in the author's view, his precise meaning could be conveyed in no simpler

form—the very thought was, like a centre, lost—the problem being, to find it by means of radii from the periphery.

Readers who have not already classed themselves with Foster's admirers and disciples, may not, perhaps, be led to do so by a perusal of these Lectures: as to those who are—and it is not a few—and who have learned to interpret his peculiar intellectual medium, they will mentally translate them into that dialect; and will be able to persuade themselves, as they go on delighted, from paragraph to paragraph, that their own Foster stands forth in each, entire. Persons of the former class we shall not attempt to convert, by means of the volume before us—for Foster's reputation ought not to be staked in any such endeavour; and as to those of the second class, we may very well leave them to themselves; for we know they would not thank us for our intervention between them and their master! What is it, then, that remains for us to do, as reviewers, unless it be to conclude with the wonted impertinence—and, in this instance, how impertinent! of “cordially recommending” the book to the perusal of “our readers!” Nevertheless, we shall indulge, for a little while, the casual meditations which several of the Lectures have suggested; meantime, if they so please, Foster's admirers may pursue their own.

This distinguished man, when he was at the height of his time, formed to himself, or brought out, a class of minds having organic affinity with his own; and which he led on “with power;” and to their own high delight and solid advantage. If we thus speak of this influence—and it was a wide influence, in the past tense, it is not because we regard Foster's fame, as an English writer, as ephemeral; but, because, since the time of his first notoriety, a mighty revolution has had place in the intellectual and moral world, such as seems already to antiquate whatever is older than about five and twenty years. John Foster, and some others of his distinguished contemporaries, whose reputation brightened the religious literature of the early years of the present century, belong to an era—or dispensation, that has reached its close: its notions, its modes of feeling, its style and temper, having become almost obsolete: an economy it was that has been rudely pushed aside by a new order of things.

In truth, the perusal of this volume, grave as are its themes, and sedate as is its tone, has, with ourselves, (and it may be so with others,) conveyed a sort of funereal feeling, as if the things which once awoke the soul and its affections, were passing in solemn pomp to their sepulchres! The Lecturer, serious always, and deeply moved with a sense of the infinite moment of “the things that are unseen and eternal,” takes his round among subjects that are the least entangled with the changing interests of the pre-

sent life, and which bear the most immediately upon the destiny of man as the expectant of immortality, and, therefore, and by a natural consequence, nothing of the vivacity, nothing of the animation and gall, nothing of the life and spite, nothing of the wit and malice, and nothing of the inanity and froth of our now-going controversies, attaches to this posthumous volume. The contrast can scarcely fail to strike every reader; and to some it may seem to carry with it a disparaging comparison. How dull are the best things that can be said about "the life to come," when heard in the same hour with a church-polity argument! How much like a tale thrice told does the message of salvation sound in the ears of those who have lately listened to that kindling logic which proves that there can be "no salvation" out of "our Church"! How poor are the remote glories of eternity, when set over against the visible splendours of a hierarchy! The Lecturer "reasons" in solemn earnestness concerning "righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come;" but we must remember, that he closed his course before these "last times" came upon us. His thoughts are deep and high, and his words full of force—entering the soul; yet, before the reader can come into correspondence with the preacher, he must have put far away from his recollection those mockeries of things divine and spiritual to which our recent controversies have given so false and dangerous a prominence. Much have we all to forget and to unlearn, and to throw aside, if we would return to a right feeling concerning the *disproportion* between that which is of the substance of Christianity, and that which is adjunctive only; nor do we remember a book better fitted than the one with which we have now to do, to awaken in the perturbed and dissipated religious mind, just impressions of this vast disparity.

We could easily believe that, as he went on in his course of Lectures, Foster warmed, and wrought himself up to his pitch of intellectual action; for the earlier homilies are the least impressive; and may, perhaps, discourage some readers. That elementary style of thought which gives grandeur to so many of his pages, produces the effect of what is jejune, or trivial, unless it be freshened with his characteristic energies of illustration and language. His similitudes, always appropriate, and often beautiful and sublime, if they be altogether wanting, or, if very sparingly introduced, leave to the solid material of instruction just so much weight as it might possess in the preacher's own apprehension; but, in this form, it barely makes its way into the mind of the reader. Probably the Lecturer, and indeed his notes in parentheses seem to indicate it, trusted, at first, to the impulse of the moment for the decoration and illustration of his subject; but as he went on, he more copiously inserted these adjuncts in his manuscript; finding

himself, perhaps, less happy in the extemporaneous elucidation of his thoughts, than he had supposed he might be.

The course of Lectures exhibits, with a sort of alternation, the two characteristics of Foster's mind, when applying itself to ethical and religious subjects—the one, as we think, being a surgeon-like intuition of the morbid affections of human nature; with a not-to-be-diverted determination to lay bare, at least, if not to cure or to remove the disease. The other of these characteristics, really, though not *obviously* related to the first, was the tendency to converse with, and to fathom, whatever is the most profound and vast in that scheme of things within which the human system is revolving; this tendency, conventionally, not accurately designated as “philosophic,” was not, in any proper sense, scientific, nor at all in alliance with the modern temper, which impels to the pursuit of truth by induction; on the contrary, it has an analogy, not remote, with the speculative mood of the earlier gnostics—a mood and style which is Asiatic, rather than European; it is a moral and intellectual tendency which the Christian revelation at once gives impulse to indirectly, and which directly it checks and forbids.

We may adduce a sample or two of both kinds, dissimilar as they are; and yet, as we shall see, proper to one and the same mind. Some passages of the first sort, which we shall adduce, exhibit Foster's eminent ability in presenting the most trite themes in a manner so novel, and yet neither quaint nor affected, as actually to startle the hearer; sometimes to make him literally start; and, in bringing forward these instances, we may take occasion to point out an adjunctive peculiarity of his order of mind—we mean a stern resolution to repudiate religious systems, or theological dicta, along with a most docile and reverential regard to whatever seemed to him undoubtedly Scriptural, whether or not it might be altogether *acceptable* to him abstractedly as a dogma. Remarkable instances might be cited in which, while with his right arm he wrathfully assails what man has taught, (on assumed ground of Scripture,) he, with his left, clasps to his bosom, devoutly and meekly, *very nearly the same belief*, in its simply Scriptural form! What mistakes, says the Lecturer, do we fall into when applying the designations, “friend” and “enemy!”

“Advert, in your thoughts, to the first temptation in the world—the first communication to man of opinion and advice, after God had finished speaking. The most gross, and impious, and pernicious falsehood was pronounced; what there was the most absolute evidence must be such. And it was taken for the language of a friend! For what plainer proof can there be that the speaker is regarded as a friend, than that his advice is practically taken, when the taking of it involves the most momentous interests?”



"It is but in passing, that we notice how much into the dark this fact plunges us, in respect to the question, 'What really was, in kind and degree, the original rectitude of man?' The bare fact proves, irresistibly, that too much of what many systematic divines have inconsiderately written can be no better than poetry.

"Again, in exemplification of how men have judged of friends—how did the world become covered with a deluge of error, but because those were accounted friends who spoke the reverse of truth? Ask again, where and when has it been that flatterers were not admitted and welcomed as friends? What a prodigious singularity in history were it, if there were recorded any nation, or tribe, or city, in which these were generally and practically discouraged and silenced, and honest truth was the way to favour! Whenever was it, that honest truth was the obvious expedient of self-interest? Self-interest with men is to be promoted by giving them the persuasion that we are their friends. Well then, has their faithfulness been the way in which men have gone about to make their fellow-mortals esteem them for friends? How often has the amicable state of feeling been broken up by telling the truth, even when done in a proper spirit and manner! The great Apostle himself, seems not without apprehension of such an effect, sincere as he was, and affectionate, and venerable, and even speaking to them with the authority of God. And still, and always, is not this honest expression of truth one of the most difficult and hazardous things a friend has to do? All which is but one more example to show that, in this world, whatever is the best in a thing, is the most difficult to be had, and to be kept in that thing."—P. 46.

So that he may but touch the malady, and defeat the patient's infatuated self-love, which would evade the operator's hand, this skilful practitioner lays aside all decoration, and all style; and is as homely, and as colloquial as the most familiar of a man's friends: the contrast is remarkable between some passages of this sort, and others in the same author's writings, in which a ponderous rhythmical structure of sentences conveys the loftiest conceptions of his great mind in a mode well fitting them. Of the former sort is the following:—

"We will but suppose one more answer to the question,

"*'What would you wish your friend to be?'*

"Answer. 'I would wish him to be such that, as the last result of my communications with him, a great deal of whatever may be defective and wrong in me shall have been disciplined away.' But, by what manner of operation, if he is never to hint at such a thing? Is it to be by some moral magic? Or is he to presume no further than to admonish by example? What! not even if he perceives that that admonition does not take effect? How many pointed suggestions of his mind is he to withhold from putting into words, in waiting to see whether they will arise in your own thoughts? May he not justly despair of accomplishing much beneficial correction, so long as he must not say that he intends or wishes to do it? so long, in short, as he

feels himself in hazard of becoming, in your regard, an 'enemy,' by telling you the truth?

"Thus men will profess, and perhaps unthinkingly believe, that they derive the most essential benefits derivable from a true friend; but if he shall offer to impart them, he becomes an 'enemy!' But consider, what an invitation, the while, this temper of mind gives to real enemies;—to the flatterer;—to the designing hypocrite;—to every imposition the mind can put on itself:—and to the great deceiver of souls;—to *any* thing but salutary truth!

"The great cause of this perversity and repugnance is, that it cannot be but that plain truth (by whatever voice) must say many things that are displeasing. All censure is so; as it hurts that most quick, and delicate, and constant of all feelings, *self-love*. And censure! who dares to say in how many points the full unmitigated application of truth to him would *not* be censure? And who dares to say how many of these points might not be struck upon by a clear-sighted friend, that should unreservedly express 'the truth?' Hence the disposition to regard him as an 'enemy.'

"Another thing greatly contributing to this feeling toward him is, a want of the real earnest desire to be in all things set right; a kind of hollow truce which is kept up with conscience, with great difficulty, easily disturbed, and the disturbance painful; therefore, 'do not, do not come to provoke the enemy within!'"—Pp. 48-49.

"Here, however, it is to be acknowledged that truth may sometimes be spoken in the spirit of an enemy, and for an enemy's purpose; far from any intention to do good, or real love of truth. In many an instance it has been spoken and urged home, for the very purpose of mortifying and tormenting. Sometimes it has been spoken in triumphant revenge for admonitions and reproofs formerly received; for the purpose of precluding a repetition of such unwelcome admonitions, and silencing the monitory voice. It has been uttered in the pure delight of being able to fix the reproach of something wrong on even the best men. It has been deliberately considered and kept back in readiness to be uttered when too late to do any good. It has even been digested and reserved in the mind to be uttered with infernal exultation, to inflict a pang on a person sinking in distress or in death."—P. 52.

The excellent advices which follow as to the mode of giving or receiving reproof, we do not cite:—the reader will, to best advantage, peruse them in their places: we are now only pointing out that characteristic of the author's mind which impelled him to pursue his purpose, disregarding of *style*, although himself an eminent master of the artificial combination of words and sentences. This next is homely enough; but it is effective, or likely to be so.

"Men should be aware, that it is an unfavourable symptom of the state of the mind, when there is an excessive and irritable delicacy as to hearing things which are the contrary of flattery. Is it a wise self-

love that would thus draw a protective and inviolable line round every thing that is ours ; round all the defects and faults we may have, which are our closest and most mischievous enemies ? As if a garrison should make a point of most sacredly protecting the very traitors it knows or suspects it has within, because they belong to their town !

"The right disposition of mind is, that which desires earnestly 'THE TRUTH'—'THE TRUTH' in *whatever* manner it may come to us. Not that the manner of its being conveyed is quite indifferent ; far from it ; but 'THE TRUTH,' howsoever it come, has its own intrinsic eternal value. And what a fool I am, if I will not take it, and apply it to its use, just because the manner of its coming to me has not pleased me !" —P. 57.

Passages such as these are not in themselves extraordinary ; but they are very noticeable facts, and are significant as indicating the structure of a mind such as Foster's. Might we say that his was an intellect so massive, so ponderous, that wherever it moved, it always worked itself down, or gravitated to the very ground, or hard bottom : never did it—never could it, glide upon a surface ;—never did it dance upon the rippled wave ;—never toss and wallow midway between surface and solid :—the bottom, and nothing else could upbear it, and therefore, this same mind, at one time reaches the depths of the very abyss of thought, which the plumb does not measure ; and at another, drags itself with a grating noise over shingle and shallows. Passages might easily be collected from Foster's writings, exhibiting a sort of incongruity—the profound and the trite, alternately ; but we think the two kinds of writing are only diverse operations of that one law of intellectual gravitation which his mind always obeyed : all the difference, vast as it is, resulting from the variations in the *level* of the subject, whether a "thousand fathoms down," or hard upon the worn ways of the human tread.

Grace, nice adjustment, artificial collocation, are best managed—where indeed they are looked for, and where they can be appreciated—on the surface ; but the great mind we have now to do with moved never on the surface (except indeed when there was nothing beneath it,) and it is well worth the observance of those who are forming a style for themselves, that Foster accumulates images and illustrations, very much with the sort of rough-handed haste of a diver, who, in as few seconds as possible, is collecting whatever he can snatch, that is precious, from a wreck deep under water. Any master of mere words, any polisher of paragraphs, might take up the raw material of some of these pages, and work it up, and "improve it" wonderfully, at least in his own apprehension ; and yet we believe that a sound taste would, after all, turn to the "original" with an undoubting preference.

"But now let us a little while consider the precept in its general and comprehensive application. 'Watch and pray that ye enter not into temptation.' There is enjoined here a feeling of apprehension and alarm. It is equivalent to saying—'Do not suffer yourself to be at ease,'—'Beware of quietly enjoying your life. You are lost if you live without fear.' But there is an emotion of the heart against entertaining this state of feeling. 'How grievous is it never to be secure; never to be indulged in the happiness of an easy, unheeding confidence!' It suggests the idea of a place where a man can hardly go to sleep, lest the plunderer or assassin be watching, or hovering near unseen; or of a place where the people can walk out no whither, without suspicion of some lurking danger or enemy not far off; and are to be constantly looking vigilantly and fearfully round; a place where they cannot ascend an eminence, nor wander through a sequestered valley, nor enter a blooming grove, nor even a garden of flowers, without having the image of the serpent, the wild beast, or a more deadly mischief in human shape, as vividly present to the imagination as the visible enemy is to the eye; a place where they would hesitate to enter in at a gate or a door though a friendly countenance (apparently such) were shown there to invite them in. It would be said, who could endure to live in such a place? Then, my friends, who can endure to live in this world? for these are but emblems of the condition of danger in which the soul sojourns on earth. Such a picture represents the danger, but fails in the other respect, the apprehensive caution of the sojourners!

"For as to moral and spiritual dangers the greater number seem to have determined to indulge in a careless and almost unlimited confidence. What an amazing account of things, if it were possible to calculate the amount of suspicion, apprehension, vigilance, precaution, and preventive expedient among mankind, and then distinguish that proportion of these which has reference to moral and spiritual dangers! Would it not be as if the race thought themselves threatened on the one side, with more than all the plagues of Egypt, and on the other (where their most important interests lie) by merely some clouds of dust? As a natural consequence, they are overrun, and spoiled, and ruined, by what they so little dread and guard against, that is to say, by temptations. \* \* \*

"And whence is it that temptation is so generally prevailing, so mightily prosperous in its operation? Why does not the soul meet it as water meets fire? The fearful cause is that it acts on a nature congenial and accordant to what it offers. It is fuel that meets fire! What says our own experience? Experience at what a cost! That long and most costly lesson has been thrown away upon us, if we can any longer with a heedless confidence trust our natural disposition in such a world. Yes! if we can carelessly trust it, even though the Spirit of God have imparted that infinite blessing—a principle of renovation, a pure principle from heaven, that abhors and fights against the evil as dwelling within or invading from without. But, indeed, the indispensable evidence of such a divine principle will be, an urgent and effectual sense of the necessity of watching and praying against temptation.

“‘That ye enter not into temptation.’ The words seem to say very pointedly; Beware of the beginning! of the beginning! for it is in fatal connexion with the next ensuing, and yet conceals what is behind. And since temptation is sure to be early with its beginnings, so too should watching and praying; early in life; early in the day; early in every undertaking! What haste the man must make that will be beforehand with temptation!’—Pp. 62, 66.

And it is a prominent feature in Foster's intellectual constitution, that the energy of his powers of illustration, great as they were, came into play most often, when dark, or revolting objects were before him. The present volume abounds with similitudes, and many of them are in the highest degree impressive, as well as just; nevertheless, it would not be easy to adduce instances having a happy and a sunshine aspect. The splendours of the upper world, the world of immortal blessedness and beauty, did not often—if we are to gather our surmise from his published writings, brighten this eminent man's meditations: he was wont, we presume, to look mournfully, and in a sort of amazement, upon the “evil that is in the world;” and he seems not more at liberty to look off from these lower grounds, or to gaze upon the heavens, than is the solitary hunter of the desert, who, having encountered a lion on his path, stands riveted to the spot—watching his adversary's every movement—look up! if he do—the enemy will take a spring upon him at the same moment! In a word, Foster, in another age, might have been a Gnostic of the later school: but, in this age, he was saved from something analogous to a Manichean belief, by his genuine personal piety, and by a well-reasoned conviction of the truth of the Christian system.

It is a principle—or, at least, as such we hold it—that whatever is TRUE in the moral world, must, in its ultimate meaning, and in its main purport and drift, be HAPPY also: let things look as dark as they may, on spots—it is still a daylight universe we live in. It was not to Epicureans, but to those who “knew the truth,” that the reiterated admonition is addressed—“Rejoice always:—again, I say, rejoice.” To the Manichee, the universe—the round world itself—whole and entire, became “a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence;” and in the false mood generated by this misapprehension of things—in the bewilderment of this “scandalized” state of the soul, the darkest impieties were imagined, and were uttered, with the intention of saving, thereby, the first principle of piety! The functions of Foster's moral nature were not diseased; but we think there was in his constitution an actual tendency to a morbid condition. As a teacher of Christianity, this inward fault, if it existed, would slacken his energy, and abate his successes: as an ethical philosopher, it must tend to perplex whatever system he might adopt,

with assumptions utterly irreconcilable ; nevertheless, in its influence over him as a man of genius, the very same constitutional bias, imparted a depth and an intensity to his mode of thinking, which enchains the reader of his works : and some of these, such as the " Discourse on Missions," like a sombre and moody epic, enchant the imagination by terror ; in no sense can this Discourse be spoken of as a practical adhortation to duty ; for that which incites men to action, and impels them to successful good-doing, must ever present to them a bright look-out—a warm glow on the horizon.

What we are now about to cite, is not in itself to be reprobated as untrue ; nor as in any way improper ; if only it be not allowed to give its hue and tone to the soul.

" But we may first observe, what a mighty amount of thinking there is in human spirits that does not come under the censure of the text. And do we say this in congratulation of our race ? No ! It is little cause for satisfaction that a criminal stands unaccused of one degree of guilt because it is a deeper guilt that is imputed. The epithet '*vain*,' in its strict acceptation, implies something trifling—light—insignificant—empty. It is therefore not the proper description of *wicked* thoughts. For example, impious thoughts respecting the Divine Being ;—thoughts formed in the spirit of disapproval, aversion, and rebellion ;—thoughts of malignity ;—thinking, in order to indulge malevolent dispositions, rancour, revenge ;—thinking how to give effect to these dispositions, purposes, devices, schemes, expedients ;—thoughts intent on wickedness of any kind ; dwelling on it with complacency and preference ; pursuing it in desire, intention, and project :—such thoughts are of too aggravated evil to be called '*vain*' thoughts. They are not trivial, idle actions of the mind, but often strong and grave ones ; tending powerfully to an effect.

" And but consider, how much of *this* order of thinking there is in human minds ! So that it looks like a quite minor vision of evils when we turn to the view of the mere vanities of the mind. But how striking the reflection, that it looks so only by comparison with something so much worse that there is in human spirits !

" Thus, if a good man had been compelled to sojourn awhile among the most atrocious of mankind, cruel savages rioting in blood and the infliction of tortures (as in Dahomey, Mexico, Ashantee) ; or pirates, desperadoes, and murderers, and at last escaped into the society of frivolous, vain triflers ; by force of comparison this might seem almost like innocence and goodness ; till he recollected his rules of judgment, and said, '*But this, too, is bad.*'

" So we see how the case is with the moral state of man ! You may fix upon an evil, and by the application of rules, rational and divine, see that it is absolutely a great one. But going deeper, you may reduce it to seem as if it were but a slight one, by comparison with something else which you find in man. Thus vain thoughts, compared with vicious polluted thoughts, malignant thoughts, and

blasphemous thoughts. Oh, the depth to which the investigation and the censure may descend!

"We can easily picture to our minds some large neglected mansion in a foreign wilderness; the upper apartments in possession of swarms of disgusting insects;—the lower ones the haunt of savage beasts;—but the lowest, the subterraneous ones, the retreat of serpents, and every loathsome living form of the most deadly venom.

"With respect to the jurisdiction of the thoughts, it is an unfavourable circumstance that the man is committed wholly to himself, without external restraint or interference. (Putting out of view the divine inspection.) His thoughts are his own; they are within a protecting cover; for them he is not exposed to be censured and made ashamed by the inspectors of his outward conduct; often he *would* be so ashamed, if such a thing could happen as a sudden mental transparency. Under this protection and exemption, it is quite certain that if he shall not exercise a careful government over his thoughts in the fear of God, they will run to vanity, at the least. It is their easiest operation; it is their mere animal play: they hate to carry a weight, except when the passions lay it on. A man may too well verify this by a very little reflective attention.

"Observe next, that if the thoughts are left unrestrained to commit folly, they will commit an immensity of it. In this kind of activity, the thinking power is never tired nor exhausted. Think of the rapidity of the train! how sure it is that another, and still another, will instantly come! Think of the endless evolutions, the never-ceasing sport, the confused multiplicity! Never stagnant pool was more prolific of flies, nor the swarm about it more wild and worthless! But what a wretched running to waste of the thinking principle! '*How long shall thy vain thoughts lodge within thee?*'"—Pp. 73-76.

Foster, as we have said, has often been called the "philosophic essayist;" and the epithet is admissible if we take it only in a loose sense, intending by it deep-thinking—original, and intellectually great: but "philosophical," in the sense of scientific, he was not: his mental structure, we think, was nearly of the anti-scientific order; and as often as he touches upon subjects which can be profoundly treated in no other than the analytic mode, he speedily moves off from the ground; and he does so, first, because he will stay no where *on the surface* of things; and then because he was conscious—perhaps distinctly conscious, that analysis, with its low temperature, and its regulated, step-by-step movement, was not his proper function. The two admirable Lectures on "Formality and Remissness in Prayer," might be cited as illustrative of what we here intend. They cannot be read without advantage by any who are at all open to the influence of religious motives; but in glancing at what may be termed the philosophy of prayer, or, more properly, the

theory of the efficacy of prayer, as it affects the scheme of causation in the moral world, the Lecturer draws back—and many will say—discreetly draws back, and, after a note of admiration, (p. 117,) includes, in brackets, the mere names of “Paley, Price,” &c.; as a sort of apology in retiring from the arduous subject.

In the next Discourse—the tenth, and in its counterpart, the seventeenth—we find him quite at home, while, with signal beauty of illustration, he draws practical wisdom from the characteristics of “spring,” and “autumn;” and we should add the nineteenth on “winter.” If we were intending to adorn our pages, on this occasion, we should cite a good portion of these three Lectures. Readers of taste—young persons of intellectual cast, will peruse them, and re-peruse them, with a freshening delight. Of the same quality, and yet rising to a loftier tone, and in the highest degree impressive, is the Lecture on the destruction of the “Cities of the Plain;” it is a running commentary on the text; and, as thrown into this form, the novelty and the grandeur of the thoughts create the more surprise; how few men could have put together such a string of remarks upon a biblical narrative! In truth, we recollect no name which might fitly be placed by the side of Foster’s on this ground. In simplicity of language, in majesty of conception, in the eloquence of that conciseness which conveys, in a short sentence, more of meaning than the mind dares at once admit, this lecture—with that on “Elijah’s sacrifice,” and the one on “Noah and the Deluge,” are, in our view, unmatched compositions. A reader of any sensibility, or of any imaginativeness, suspends his breath, as his eye runs on from paragraph to paragraph. We do not doubt that Foster might have expanded and elaborated these discourses, so as that they should have produced a more profound effect; and so as would have gained for them the admiration of ten times as many readers as will, in fact, ponder over these; but in their actual state, we do not mean crude state, they unfold—so much the more impressively, the inner grandeur of the writer’s soul: such as he here appears, was Foster’s self: such was he, apart from artificial excitement, and from labour or effort: let him but open the Bible, in any place where the sublime and beautiful are combined with the terrific, and Foster’s mind shows its native quality, and its own dimensions!

In one of his Lectures he rebukes, justly, those as indulging “vain thoughts,” who are perpetually vexing themselves with fruitless wishes, “that things had happened otherwise:” nevertheless we must for a moment indulge the now fruitless wish, that Foster had taken to himself the task of expounding, in connected series, the great events of biblical history, just in this same style;



and keeping always clear of scientific exegesis, which was not his talent.

Those of these Discourses\* in which the Lecturer assails the spiritual lethargy and the perversion of the human mind, carry such a method of treatment as far as it can be carried; for nothing can be imagined more searching in its quality than are many passages in the Lectures now referred to; nothing more intimate in its application; nothing more comprehensive as to the subterfuges of the heart. The preacher besieges the soul—he digs a trench about it—he hems it in on every side—he plies the ram at every feeble point, and works his way, irresistibly, into the very citadel; and the place, with all the munitions of pride, are carried; and yet a victory is not effected! For it is not thus that human nature is to be vanquished. Philosophy would forbid our expecting such a result from such a process; and we think, too, that the Christian economy, and the style of apostolic teaching, forbids it also. The Lectures now in view are inimitable in this line; and if the method does not prove itself successful in the hands of Foster, it might well be regarded as hopeless in any other hands. The experiment could not be made under more favourable auspices. Nor, indeed, should it be denied that there are hearers and readers whose conscience may be powerfully affected by these very discourses; and surely none could regret the perusal of them. But the practical question comes—are they models which should be much imitated?—only to a very limited extent, as we humbly think. Good men there are, and they are some of the best, and the most intellectual, (if not the most spiritual,) who fret themselves to spectres while mournfully gazing, from week to week, upon the self-deluding scores or hundreds to whom it is their lot to minister; and their ministrations varied by little, but the changes in their own comfortless moods of discouragement—sometimes peevish, sometimes angry, sometimes imploring, consist of wearying endeavours to bring the conscience fairly in front of its *last*—its very last—false plea, and to drag the culprit soul forth, by warrant of Heaven, from its innermost subterfuge! Meanwhile the few hearers who are of the preacher's own sort, admire and applaud his "deep knowledge of the deceits of the heart," and, at the same time, chide their own folly, which prevents their profiting, "as much as they ought," by *such* lectures upon the morbid anatomy of human nature. The larger number just say, "It's all too true; I wish —— would take it to

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\* Such are Lect. II. The attachment due to spiritual objects. V. Watchfulness and prayer. VI. VII. Vain thoughts. XIII. False grounds of superiority in holiness. XIV. Fallacies operating against earnestness in religion. XVI. Uses and perversions of conscience.

heart;" and more than two or three snore away from the first Sunday of the year to the last; and no wonder; for the human mind, if it is to be auspiciously dealt with, must be presented with objects of another order; beneath such influences it does not melt! Try a parallel experiment: carry a polished speculum to the Arctic seas; hold it up in the chilly sunshine, in front of a jagged iceberg, and let this iceberg—if it have a soul and senses—therein contemplate its own horrific visage; and all impartially depicted! every frosty spike is there, and every deathly chasm! and yet, after having thus beheld its "natural face in a glass," there it floats, neither smoothed nor thawed! But now, moor this same frozen mountain toward a southern latitude: in a word, let the bright sun in his power smite it with his joyous beams! and how soon is every facet furrowed with torrents! The ice dissolves *now*—the entire mass assumes another form—its pinnacles of pride are already gone: its very centre of gravity has shifted; and it rolls over, and it melts to the bottom, and mingles its substance with the universal waters! We need not open up our similitude, which will interpret itself. Foster could indeed treat human nature as few can treat it; but whether his ministrations were happily and ordinarily "successful," we do not know, nor need we inquire, for his sphere was of another sort, and the good he has effected is not of a kind that could be statistically reported.

The most trite subjects Foster presents under a new and impressive aspect; and this, not by the aid—as is so often attempted by inferior minds—of laborious exaggerations, and of strange conceits, set out in antithesis; but by a *natural*, and, with him, a simply managed return to those elementary thoughts which may have been passed by and rejected by others, as "too obvious" to be worth the trouble of working them into a grave discourse. In *his* hands, some of these natural reflections combine, along with a childlike simplicity, a true sublimity; and in some instances, it is but a touch—a touch of the master's hand, that transmutes the well-nigh inane or jejune, into the great and beautiful.—

"When the necessity and value of knowledge are thought of, it is readily admitted that *self*-knowledge is about the most necessary of all. From of old, it has been accounted a precept of the highest wisdom, 'KNOW THYSELF.'

"Might we not, then, wonder a little, that there should not be more of this knowledge among men, and more assiduity to acquire it? That attention should be so much averted from this concern? For I suppose our general belief is—that there is but little. Is not this the notion? In a numerous assembly, or in the crowd of a city, it is presumed, by any one that happens to think of it, that very few, among the numbers

round him, have a deep, comprehensive, well-rectified, steady estimate of themselves—a true insight. The presumption, or surmise, is understood to go even as far as this; namely, that suppose any number of persons acquainted with one another—the judgments they form of one another would, in the whole account, be nearer the truth than those which they entertain of their own selves, notwithstanding the great advantage men have for knowing themselves better than others can.

“But, if the case be so, how comes it to be so? Can it be, that they do not think it worth while to apply a serious attention to so near and interesting an object? or, that they have arbitrary and unsound rules in making the judgment? or, that no rules, nor force of understanding, can preserve their rectitude in the presence of self-love, as if they softened, melted, and lost their edge, in making their way through that warm, investing, protective passion? Or, again, there may be a reluctance to making a rigorous scrutiny, from fear, and thus men remain in ignorance. There may be some apprehension of finding the state of the case less satisfactory than the man is allowing himself to assume it. This may seem like expressing an inconsistency—that a man will not know what he does know. But it is too real and common a case; intimations of something not right are unwillingly perceived; apprehension of what there may be beneath is felt; a man would rather not be sure of the whole truth; would wilfully hope for the best, and so pass off from the doubtful subject, afraid to go too far inward.

“But here is a most remarkable and strange spectacle! A soul afraid of itself!—afraid of being deeply intimate with itself; of knowing itself; of seeing itself. It is easily apprehended how a human spirit might be afraid of another being—of another spirit in a human body; apprehensive in being near it—within reach of its disposition, qualities, and action—afraid to see and meet the corporeal person it is in; alarmed at what there may be, or is suspected to be, in that spirit; shrink from approach, communication, or any lure to confidence. ‘I have a perception of evil omen; a silent warning of danger; there is possible ruin to me in that spirit.’

“It is easy to apprehend that a human soul might be afraid of a disembodied spirit, evincing its presence by voice or appearance; if it seemed to attend a man in his solitary walk, or to be a temporary visitant in his apartment. It would be an awful companionship!—the revealed proximity of the other world; dark mystery personified—a being presented as if in an equivocal conjunction of life and death; with powers unknown—and which the mortal can meet with no similar powers! All this, on the supposition that it were a departed human spirit. More than this, if it were deemed a spirit of mightier order.

Such fear of other beings would seem natural enough. But think of a human soul in dread of itself! having had some glimpses of itself, afraid to meet its own full visage—afraid to stay with itself, alone, still, and attentive—afraid of intimate communication, lest the soul should speak out from its inmost recesses! All the while, what it is afraid of is its own very self, from which it is every where and for ever inseparable! A man uneasy and apprehensive in a local situation, or in the

presence of other men, may think of escape ; but in his own soul ! there he is, and is to be perpetually. Then what a predicament, when a man, directly and immediately, as being in himself, feels the apprehension of evil and danger !—feels in the presence of something he dreads to abide with, and would fly from ; would be glad to separate by a partition or veil. So that, be where he may, with other persons or alone, he has still the inevitable presence, with him and in him, of something which he cannot be at ease in trusting himself with.”—Pp. 336-340.

We now wait, as we have already said, for Foster's “Life and Letters,” or, we should say, for whatever he has left which may fairly, and in consistency with his own expressed or understood intentions, be given to the world—given, not indeed to an eager public, that will snatch up its five or ten thousand copies, and then think not again of the momentary gratification which it has thence derived ; for Foster was not the writer to hold at his command any *such* “public” as this ; nor, in truth, is this the moment when the remains of an intellectualist of so high an order would produce any great sensation. But his literary legacy, bequeathed to the reflective and cultured minds of this age and the next, will soon be looked for by the immediate legatees ; and we hope it will be duly and faithfully made over to them by those to whose hands these “assets” have been intrusted.

How earnestly, how devoutly is it to be desired that the tempest-tossed religious mind should, at this time, be drawn away from the circle of agitation ! Whatever may be the ultimate consequence—the intended issue, of the controversial and ecclesiastical turmoil of the last few years, every one who quietly and seriously observes and listens, painfully knows that the proximate effect of all this wrathful stir and hubbub has not been good : nay, that it has deeply vitiated the Christian mass, and has been fatal to personal piety in innumerable cases, diffusing a spirit the very opposite to the temper which the religion of Christ cherishes and sanctions. A soul, elevated and rendered tranquil by the habitual meditation of that which is infinite and eternal, and a disposition and deportment such as this state of the mind generates, do not comport, and never have they been found to consist with a thorough and *consenting* embroilment in ecclesiastical contentions. Christian men, whose fate it has been to be dragged down upon the arena of Church combats, know this, and how joyfully do they accept an honourable discharge from the lists ! And such men contemplate, with sorrow and dismay, the ill effects of the same unholy influences, as attaching to the masses, called religions.

But how shall they give a different and a happier direction to the current ? How stem the tide ? How brunt the swelling waters, and bid them revert to their channels ? To do so fully

surpasses human power ; and yet right-minded men will not cease so to desire such a reaction as shall tend—effectively tend—to bring it on ; and the line on which these Christian-like endeavours may be made, will be that of a direct recurrence to the loftiest themes of religious meditation—to the elementary truths of the Gospel—to those principles which constitute “*THE TRUTH*,” compared with which all matters of contestation among Christian men sink into their place of utter disfavour, if not contempt. At this very moment, let but a few minds—minds of powerful structure and right direction ;—here one, and there another—assume the leading office that belongs to them, and loudly challenge the scattered multitudes in the name of Him who is shepherd and bishop of souls : let this be done, and more than a few, in all communions, would hail with delight the summons ; and thousands around them would listen also. The fomenters of discord, the leaders of faction, the arrogant hierarch, as well as the turbulent sectarist, would feel and know that *their* summer time was past—their hour gone by !

But we stop short. The reader will scarcely need that we should unfold that connexion of ideas that has led us on toward this theme on the present occasion ; nor will he wonder that, with John Foster's name before us, we should think of others his companions, his colleagues, his contemporaries, who are gone whither he is gone ; or that we should wistfully ask, “ Who shall now lead the people toward that which is true, great, eternal ? ” The most surely successful pacificators of the Church at this moment, would be those who, taking their stand upon elementary doctrines, should carry trouble and dismay into the consciences of men individually. Men professedly Christian, would cease to strive one with another, if roused to fight with the adversary of their own souls. An awakening call to “ Repent and be converted,” heard up and down through the land, would speedily bring to its end the delusion of baptismal regeneration : and how like a mist would the mummeries, and the monkery, and the Romish-aping, and the demure nonsense of Oxford disappear, if men, great in temper, and “ mighty in the Scriptures,” were to come forth—not boasting indeed of their apostolical succession, but demonstrating it !

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ART. IV.—*A Narrative of a Visit to the Mauritius and South Africa.* By JAMES BACKHOUSE. Illustrated by Two Maps, Sixteen Engravings, and Twenty-Eight Woodcuts. 8vo. London, 1844.

MR. BACKHOUSE is a pious member of the Society of Friends. A few years ago, he believed that it was his duty to pay a *religious visit* to Australia, the Mauritius, and Southern Africa. Under the influence of this impression, he submitted to all the perils, and passed through all the toils and privations, which the fulfilment of what he regarded as a sacred obligation required. After his return, he published, some twelve months ago, a "Narrative" of the Australian portion of his visit, in which he pointed out, and by the statement of numerous facts, clearly illustrated, the great benefits which the Gospel communicates to settlers in a colony like that of South Wales; and especially its mighty and most advantageous influence on those persons who had been removed from their native land by the sentence of the laws which they had violated. Many parts of his volume might almost have been termed, "Illustrations of the Epistle of St. Paul to Philemon." The Gospel of the grace of God proclaims the solemn, but delightful truth, that Christ Jesus came into the world to *save sinners*, even *the chief*; and through its power, many who were once, like Onesimus, to society most "unprofitable," have been brought to experience, not only the exercise of the Divine mercy, but the power of that grace which restrains them from their vices, and brings them under the influence of motives and rules which transform them into "profitable" members of the community. Most truly may it be said of them, that what the law of man could by no possibility accomplish, "the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus" has effectually done. They have been "made free from the law of sin and death." Evil and strong as were their former habits, the Ethiop has changed his skin, and the leopard its spots. They have become not merely reformed criminals, but new creatures: old things have passed away, and all things become new.

Nor are these triumphs unimportant even in a political point of view. Along with advancing civilization has hitherto always been advancing crime. Legislators are perpetually employed in so altering their laws as to adapt them to the actually existing state of society, but not all they can do avails to lessen the number of criminals. And who has not both observed and deplored the fact, that even the penal inflictions of law often operate so as to strengthen, rather than diminish, the propensities to the conduct which calls for them? Among philanthropic legislators,

there is not a more common topic of complaint than that which is furnished by the fact, that they who have been imprisoned for the infraction of human law, have left their prison with increased subtlety and hardness, taking their place in society again with a disposition to crime, and an ability for its commission greater than ever : and if this be the case where the immense mass of the community walk in orderly obedience to government and law, what must be the social condition there, where society is so largely composed of *liberated convicts*—that is, of those whose crimes have required, not the comparatively lower punishment of temporary incarceration, but the higher and most decided one of expatriation? Composed of such materials, what must the mass be, especially where the corruption is a pervading and active leaven, continually strengthened by fresh admixtures, becoming, by its activity, more intense in its operation, and constantly tending to the contamination of what may have remained comparatively pure? Statesmen have felt the difficulty, and devised various plans for its removal; but however unwilling they may be to confess it, the constant proposition of fresh plans proves that they feel their labour to be, to a great extent, in vain. The evil is deeply seated within, and their appliances possess no inward power. We say not that their plans are altogether useless. Far from it. They prevent many outbreaks of crime. But the law, as a terror to evil-doers, only prevents the commission of the particular evil which it prohibits; while the evil propensity still remaining, soon finds a direction in which it may be developed with safety. Education is often mentioned, but what is commonly meant by education possesses not the slightest curative power. The knowledge of the Rule of Three will not make a man honest. Legislators begin to perceive this, and admit that education, to be moral in its influence, must be connected with religion. But everything depends on the nature of the religion with which it is connected, and on this subject we cannot help having many fears. Not that our statesmen have not had their attention called to what we believe to be the only correct view of the case. Many an *amicus curiæ* has come forward, respectfully offering to aid them in their deliberations, and earnestly soliciting to be permitted to do so. They have been repeatedly told that the only influence which can be effectual is evangelical, and that this always is so. We think it a most remarkable circumstance, that the attention of a celebrated theologian of our own day, whose writings are richly evangelical, should have been led to those very subjects of political economy which have of late years been so keenly agitated, and which, indeed, the present condition of society has rendered it impossible to overlook. With many, his treatises on certain questions have become classical, and the manner in

which his opinions are referred to by those to whose own they are favourable, shows the importance that is attached to them. Many a modern statesman has thus had the saving truth of God brought directly before him, connected with those earnest but luminous argumentations which exhibit its proper mode of operation, and trace the developing cause to its effects. They have not only been told that it will reform men, but shown how it *will*, and why it *must* reform them. Whether they have heard, or whether they have refused to hear, yet, by what we must ever consider to be a providential, as well as a remarkable circumstance, a prophet has been sent among them. That they should "hear," was perhaps more to be desired than expected. He who has no care for anything beyond a nominal Christianity, is as much opposed to the true Gospel of God as he is to the true law of God. Such persons now often talk of religion. Truth has so far won its way in English society, that they can no longer avoid doing so; but, on the real nature of religion, a most melancholy ignorance is often found to exist, and along with this ignorance, a very decided antipathy to that by which alone the effects can be produced, which all profess to desire. Mr. Backhouse's former "Narrative" furnishes many luminous illustrations of the true process of evangelical reasoning. Let the genuine Gospel be preached, and though its hearers should be such as the Apostle describes when writing to the Corinthians,\* the preacher will soon have to rejoice in a success such as no philosopher, no moralist, no formalist, ever experienced.

But we refer to this, not merely as showing the value of genuine Christianity in such a state of society as must exist in New South Wales, but as illustrating its value at home. That by which the banished criminal is truly reformed, would, at an earlier period, have prevented the commission of crime. And even this is but a small portion of the obligations which it confers on society. Wherever there is high and advancing civilization, multitudes are found living in a very artificial state, and pursue lines of conduct which, without leading them to what the law condemns as criminal, do nevertheless issue in extensive and injurious mischief. Even though Christianity were not the true source of civilization, yet, such is human nature, that advancing civilization has its evil as well as good; and an efficient, certain correction of the evil, can only be found in the concurrent influence of a genuine, and therefore powerful Christianity. Let society, in its present condition, be closely observed. The observer may lay out of sight all those portions which are exposed to the penal visitations of

\* 1 Cor. vi. 11. See also verses 9 and 10.



law. But far away from the abodes of crime, he will meet with enough, both of disorder and wretchedness, to awaken his indignation, and to make his heart bleed. We cannot now enter into particular details, neither is it at all necessary. The facts to which we allude are too obvious to require more than this general reference. We ask only one question. It will suggest for consideration all that is requisite for our present purpose. Who can estimate the amount of actual distress, personal and domestic, to be found in all classes, occasioned by the debasing immoralities, the disgusting vanity, the wasteful expenditure, the ruinous profligacy, always found in connexion with luxury, or with the aping imitation of the luxurious? But when the facts thus suggested have been contemplated, let those passages of Holy Writ be remembered, which, while they express *the laws* of Christianity, at the same time describe *the disposition* which it produces, in all who obey it from the heart.\* Such portions of divine truth, indeed, refer primarily to individuals, and there are many who content themselves with regarding them as either expressing parts of the evangelical law, or indicating what it is admitted will be features in the genuine Christian character. But no one can reflect on their deep significance without perceiving, that where truths like these become, by a cordial reception, principles implanted in the inmost soul, of which the external character is but the visible development, their social influence must be most decided, issuing in results, the full value of which it would not be possible for human mind to estimate. And, in these principles, both in their direction and power, we have the counteraction and cure of those evils which, unavoidably, are occasioned by the operation of the various incidents of advancing civilization upon beings such as men are known to be. Those evils are so notorious and so great, that those who *jump to a conclusion*, hoping that change will be improvement, have sometimes been ready to advocate the opinion, that high civilization is not a social good, and that what they have considered, half-dreaming about Arcadian shepherds and shepherdesses, as the simplicity of a rustic life scarcely rising above savagism, is vastly to be preferred. They are mistaken. A certain remedy for all these evils exists. It is found—but it is *only* found—in genuine Christianity.

But while we thus claim for Christianity, rightly understood, that it be considered as the true and efficient corrective of the evils which are found to be connected with advancing civilization, and which, we have seen, are to be attributed, not to civilization itself,

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\* The reader may, at his leisure, turn to such passages as the following :—Heb. xiii., 5 ; Rom. xii., 2 ; Eph. v., 18 ; Philip. iii., 18, 19 ; Col. iii., 5 ; 2 Thess. iii., 11, 12 ; 1 Tim. ii., 9, 10 ; ib. v., 6 ; Philip. iv., 12 ; Rom. xiii., 12, 13, 14.

simply considered, but to civilization as operating on human nature, as human nature is described in Scripture; we likewise claim for it, and for the very same reasons, that it be considered as the efficient cause and continual promoter of civilization, where hitherto it has not existed. To this view of the subject the remainder of the present article will be devoted. It is, indeed, a high argument, but we address ourselves to it without fear. Our method will be chiefly analytical. We shall point out, aiming at all possible simplicity, some of the chief elements of character and principles of conduct which always *are*, which always *must be*, implanted where true Christianity is truly received. We shall exhibit the effects which these, viewed in their true nature, as essentially active, must unfailingly produce. *In those effects we behold a genuine civilization—a civilization all the more valuable, that in the cause from which it proceeds, and by which it is continually promoted, we find at the same time the corrective of the evils with which, from its operation on human nature, it has been hitherto always connected.* Will the reader excuse us, if we request him to look for nothing like rhetorical declamations in the treatment of the question? There are, indeed, subjects in which these would not only be admissible, but proper, not to say requisite; but this is not one of them. Our object is to communicate the sincere conviction by which our own mind is deeply impressed, and to endeavour to do this in a manner which shall approach, as nearly as in such an argument is possible, to rigid demonstration. We wish to present the facts and principles which the argument includes, in the clear daylight of simple truth; and even though we could cast on them the beautiful, but sometimes partly obscuring hues of the beam decomposed by its passage through the prism, we would not do so. Thankful shall we be, if we are enabled to conduct the reader along such a course of thought and inquiry, as shall bring him, when he has prosecuted it to its just conclusion, more decidedly and more devoutly than ever to

assert eternal Providence,  
And justify the ways of God to man.

In this fallen, but not forgotten world, there is a class far more numerous than that to which our foregoing remarks have applied. There are those whose condition—if comparisons may be instituted where all is so gloomy—is far more dark, and the rather, because, to all merely human calculation, it seems to be hopeless. We refer to the *Savage Tribes*, located in various parts of the world. By what means shall these be raised up to the condition of men? How shall these almost *de-humanized* creatures be formed into orderly societies?

It has been a favourite dream with some—and there are those who still thus dream—that what is called *Savagism* is the original condition of man, and that all society has grown out of this state of nature, as it has been termed. It would be most amusing to consider the theories which have been based on this foundation, if the trifles of which they are composed did not lead to such serious evils. But we are not going to enter upon the question. The philosophy of it is bad, and it is still worse in all its historical aspects. It receives no support from the documents which narrate the past movements of society. All the evidence is on the other side. And the more the habitable world is explored, the more accurately the state and character of its savage tribes, especially, are examined, the more plainly does it appear that savagism is a deteriorated, not an original, condition. The stream flows downward, and floating with the current are often found the products of that higher level from which it has proceeded, and which evidently differs greatly from that through which it is now passing. And the same *explorations* that so completely establish this fact, show likewise, that they who have sunk so low, possess no means of self-restoration. If raised at all, they must be raised from without; and if not raised from without, they will sink lower and lower, till nothing remains of man but the outward form, and the irremovable, but undeveloped inward human faculties, and perfectly void human capacity. They will become what the aborigines of New South Wales have already become.

Without directly considering this subject, Mr. Backhouse, in this "Narrative" of the second portion of his travels, supplies very decisive evidence upon it; and as we shall several times have to quote from his interesting volume, we may just now, and once for all, devote a few sentences to it.

Mr. Backhouse traversed the principal countries of Southern Africa, and visited the stations of the several Missionary Societies having their agents there. We may observe in passing, that although the leading objects of his journey were, of course, moral, yet in attending to these, he by no means overlooked physical nature. Belonging to a Society in which self-control is learned so early, and generally, so well, we do not expect to find him carried away by the enthusiastic admiration of natural sublimity and beauty, to which some travellers appear to abandon themselves; but he is far removed from insensibility. His feelings are not the less deep for being calm. He travels with an observant eye, and a heart ready to receive all just impressions, whether from nature or man. Nor does he ever forget that he is a creature of God, travelling in the world which God has made. Many talk about "looking through nature up to nature's

God," but Mr. Backhouse really does so. This may render the volume somewhat distasteful to the reader who dislikes the introduction of religious reflections in works not directly theological; but they who wish to know the present condition, and opening prospects, of South Africa, and to be furnished at the same time with clear representations of the face of the country, and of the mode of travelling, and incidents of travel, together with popular, but not inaccurate or indistinct accounts of its mineralogy, botany, zoology, &c., who, in short, look for a pleasing, but instructive, book of travels, which shall also pleasingly interest their religious feelings, will not be disappointed in Mr. Backhouse. We have found him a most agreeable and profitable companion in our "travels at home;" looking on nature as we can suppose that Scott, of Amwell, would do, and on man, in whatsoever circumstances he found him, as a Christian ought to do.

But we have been most interested in those statements which the volume contains, which, though not written with that object, do yet very clearly, illustrate the way in which Christianity civilizes the savage. Mr. Backhouse furnishes us with some of the earliest developments of religious principle in the mind of the savage, and in those earliest developments we have, *unmistakably*, an incipient civilization. We see the manner in which the principle operates, and the direction which it takes. We see likewise the power which it possesses as an antagonist to other principles, and in its victories over these, we have a pledge of its ultimate triumphs. To some of Mr. Backhouse's statements we shall refer in the progress of our argument.

But we must now clear the way for that argument, by explaining what we mean by Christianity. What is that cause to which we ascribe such mighty effects? We have already *intimated* our views on this question; we would now somewhat more particularly express them. There are *differences* among Christians which refer only to what are, comparatively, subordinate details, leaving a most important *agreement* in substantial principles. But there are differences of another character—differences which go directly to the nature of personal religion, and to the means by which it is to be promoted. It is to *these* differences that the leading controversies of the present day refer. British Christians seem as though they were gradually forming two great parties. One of them is distinguished by attachment to what may be termed *Ecclesiastical Catholicity*; the other, by attachment to what may be termed *Evangelical Principles and Doctrines*. We take our place among the latter. That Christianity which is, by the divine ordinance, "the power of God unto salvation," and that Christianity alone, produces the effects which

constitute, when viewed in their social aspects, a genuine, healthy, and growing civilization. We lay stress on this. It is a most remarkable circumstance, and one that has not drawn to it, we think, the attention which it deserves, that Mr. Newman has published a sermon in which he speaks of Christianity as appearing to man under the mysterious aspect of a failure. Undoubtedly this is the aspect of Christianity as it is misunderstood by Mr. Newman; and we have often wondered that the startling character of his conclusion, did not lead him to suspect the soundness of his premises. But his premises are not ours. By Christianity we wish to be understood as referring to that teaching in which all the evangelical churches, both in Great Britain and America, agree. We mean by the term that teaching, with which, as all these Churches are likewise agreed, the promised divine blessing is connected, and which, as thus accompanied, leads to that inward "kingdom of God" which "is not meat and drink, but righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost;" the teaching which has *Christ crucified* for its theme, and *justification by grace through faith* for its watchword. Whatever is opposed to this, is explicitly declared by St. Paul to be "another Gospel," which "is not the Gospel;" and so deeply was he convinced that with this alone was connected that divine power which is essential to the success of the ministry, that he most solemnly denounced—let us add that he was led by inspiration to denounce—that fearful anathema against all preachers of a spurious gospel, which we find recorded in the very beginning of the Epistle to the Galatians,—“But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other Gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, *let him be accursed*. As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other Gospel unto you than that ye have received, *let him be accursed*.” Very different this from the anathemas of human councils. Often mistaken in their object, and too frequently proceeding from the unhallowed source of passionate bigotry, their utterance has been powerless. They have been the “*curse causeless*,” the mere breath of weak and fallible men. Not so the anathema of the Apostle: suggested by inspiration, and directed against most mischievous error, it is associated with the resistless and abiding energy of God himself, and its lowest effects are seen in the blight which rests on the labours of those who employ such humanly-forged instruments. They prophesy to the dry bones, but no vital breathing follows their word, and the valley remains as full of death and corruption as ever. Civilized society, when largely wrought upon by such teaching, is often found presenting some of the worst features of savagism—a savagism rendered more sensual and barbarous by the light which has been imparted by

that measure of truth mixed up with the spurious doctrine. If we compare the crusaders against the Albigenses with the semi-barbarous Saracens, the result of the comparison will be all in favour of the orientals. We question whether the annals of savage life could supply instances of sensuality more disgusting, than those which are furnished by the unblushing profligacy of some who profess and call themselves Christians; or of barbarity and ferocity more terribly revolting than are found on the duelling records of *men of revenge and honour*; or on the persecuting records of *men of religion and bigotry*, all of whom tell us that they are *very good Christians*! No. When we speak of Christianity as the only efficient instrument of civilization, we mean that teaching which, by God's blessing, "opens men's eyes, and turns them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God," and thus brings them to "receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in Christ." The only preaching that can cast out devils is that which "testifies repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ." To all other exorcizers, the reply is virtually given—"Jesus I know, and Paul I know, BUT WHO ARE YE?"

We have felt it to be the more necessary to lay stress on this subject, not only because it is essential to the conduct of our argument, but because we have found in Mr. Backhouse's "Narrative," statements which show how little can be done by a corrupt form of Christianity, towards the emancipation of man from the slavery of vice. We quote some of these statements to clear our own way. They who do not distinguish between the genuine and the spurious Gospel, might point to what they are pleased to term *the vices of Christians*, and exultingly suppose that our progress to demonstration was effectually blocked up. We tell them beforehand that we know this, that we admit it; nay, that we not only allow, but contend, that it could not be otherwise. The path is blocked up. We deny it not. But it concerns not us. Let them see to it by whom such a mistaken path has been chosen. So far from denying the facts, we bring them forward ourselves. It will at once be seen that in the case we are arguing, *they are not evidence*.

In his way from Australia to the Cape, Mr. Backhouse called at the Mauritius, and made a short stay there. He gives some most affecting representations of the social condition which he there beheld. We will string together a few illustrative sentences.

"In the course of the day, I accompanied a pious man in a visit to a sick native of Malabar, residing in Malabar Town, which is closely contiguous to Port Louis, and to which, as a residence, persons of colour were formerly restricted. This individual spoke English, and pre-

fessed Christianity, but had taken cold when out shooting on First Day! The precept, 'He that regardeth a day, regardeth it unto the Lord,' is little observed in this island, in which an infidel wreck of Popery is often mistaken for Christianity, and is that which, in the place of religion, pervades a large majority of the population. This wreck, if left to itself, would probably waste away, and give place to something having more of the life of the Gospel in it; but by the help of government salaries and patronage, the priests, who are generally despised by the people, are enabled to make great efforts to embue them with superstition and prejudice, in the place of true religion," (p. 9.) "The Papal religion, after having had this island under its pretended fostering care for more than a hundred years, *has left it in a dreadfully ignorant and immoral condition*," (ib.) "There is a wide field for Christian philanthropy; a plenteous harvest and few labourers; and while men sleep, the enemy is sowing tares *by imposing superstition and heathenism instead of Christianity*," (p. 16.) And after describing a festival, called "the Yamsey," annually kept by the heathen inhabitants from Malabar, he adds, "It is said that many persons in this land, nominally Christian, vow, when under affliction, that if they be delivered from the cause of their distress, they will devote a cock or some other offering, such as a tin hand, or some tinsel, to the Malabar priest at the Yamsey. *Thus does the wreck of Popery mix itself with heathenism*," (p. 28.)

Such a system leaves its votaries where it found them; of the influence of true religion they know very little, and experience still less; of its characteristic results, therefore, they exhibit no evidence. It is not to such as these that the solemn language of Scripture can be addressed, "*Ye are my witnesses*, saith the Lord of Hosts." But very different is the instrumentality which is at work among the Hottentots and Caffres in South Africa, and very different are its effects. The missionaries there preach that which really is "the glorious gospel of the blessed God," and they are anxiously careful that such, both in *matter* and *manner*, should be their preaching, that they shall be able to say that they "commend themselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God." Mr. Backhouse, on several occasions, bears explicit and pleasing testimony to this. And his testimony is the more valuable, in that it is plain, from various remarks, that he never forgets, what we are sure he conscientiously believes, the peculiar views of certain religious subjects taken by the Society of Friends. But, if he does not forget them, neither does he forget that truly Catholic Christianity in which the pious Quaker is one with the pious Episcopalian, or the Congregational Christian. A single instance may be given once for all. It occurred at Philipton, on the Kat River; and is recorded under date of the "30th of 1st month (January) 1839."

"In the course of the day, we were invited to meet upwards of

thirty persons, of the class called Inquirers, who assemble in the chapel once a-week, many of them coming from a considerable distance. They are persons of awakened consciences, of both sexes, and of various ages and nations, who have not yet found peace to their troubled souls. The elders of the Church confer with them, and give them such counsel as their states are respectively thought to require. Being unaccustomed to control their emotions, they often break out into loud sobs and weeping, and exhibit great bodily agitation, which, however, is not generally encouraged. On being asked what they had to say for themselves, most of them replied, Nothing; but that *they felt themselves great sinners, and desired to be saved.* On being interrogated as to how they hoped to be saved, the general answer was, *by Jesus Christ, who, they had been taught, had come from heaven, and had died for them, and without whom they could not withstand temptation, for in themselves they had no strength; they said their hearts told them that Christ alone could help them.* These sentiments were elicited by a variety of questions, as were also several facts of a deeply interesting nature. One man had been brought up at the Missionary station of Zuurbraak, had been conceited of his abilities and knowledge, and had lived in sin, till imprisoned for some misconduct, when he was brought to see his wickedness, and to feel that he must perish in sin unless saved by Jesus Christ. A Hottentot woman *had heard the gospel from her husband, who had been instructed by a pious boor, and for a time had walked in the fear of God; she had found peace through Jesus Christ, in frequent prayer; but had fallen again into sin, and again been awakened to a sense of her danger.* A fine, robust woman had lost all her relations in the wars, far in the interior; she had made her way through various tribes to the Kat river, where she had heard of Jesus, and become convinced of sin, the condemnation of which she still bitterly felt; she said she saw that Jesus alone could save her, and that she felt love to him, and hope in him, and was thankful that she had left her own country, and travelled so far to a place where she had heard of a Saviour. Another woman had left her native land, on the source of a river that watered Dingaan's country, and travelled to the Kat river, where she had heard of Jesus; she was still deeply condemned in herself for sin; she felt much for her country, but was glad she had left it and had come to a place where she had heard of a Saviour. The emotion of this woman was so great as to produce convulsive sobs, with tears, and profuse perspiration. A Fingo woman, still bearing the sense of the Lord's indignation against sin, but nevertheless hoping in Christ, said, she was resolved to keep from the immoral customs and practices of her nation, which she saw to be sinful, and to associate with the people of God, meaning the Christian Hottentots. She said, also, that she knew that the people of her own country could not save her, for they were living in sin; that none but Christ *could save her; but that the people of God could keep her in the right way.* Many other cases of a similar nature existed here, and were continually multiplying, and showing that *the Lord is bringing to pass a great work, converting the desert into a fruitful field, to the praise and glory of his own excellent Name.*"—P. 207.



Such is the Christianity which the agents of some of the leading Missionary Societies are seeking to introduce among the savage tribes of Southern Africa; such are the spiritual results which their labours are actually producing. We say, *spiritual results*, and the expression suggests a most important element of the case we are endeavouring to establish. It must be kept in view, that in the prosecution of our argument, we are assuming the continued existence and exercise of a faithful ministry, by which *the whole of Christianity* is brought to bear upon the mind, and this, in constant reference to the objects designed to be secured by it. If we may refer to the somewhat technical distribution of the various articles of evangelical truth, we would say that the *doctrines* of the Gospel, its *privileges*, its *threatenings*, its *obligations* and *precepts*, are all set forth by the men to whom is indeed "given this grace, that they should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ." And these declarations are made in reference to one definite object—that object being not merely *mental instruction*, but *spiritual illumination and conversion*. It does not satisfy the Missionaries that their hearers are taught to read, and that the Scriptures are given them for free and regular perusal; though this is a great advance from the state in which they are found. Neither does it satisfy these faithful labourers that their disciples are brought to admit certain truths into their understandings; though this, also, is a great advance—a number of new ideas being thus imparted, important in their nature, and expanding and elevating in their influence. This is by no means all. Christianity not only implies a system of *divinely revealed and invaluable truth*, but an *inward and spiritual light, and life, and power*. And unless the missionaries see the evidences of this, they are never satisfied. The faith they desire to see, is not the merely notional admission of certain doctrines, but that by which "with the heart man believeth unto righteousness." They seek to be able to testify that their hearers actually "receive the end of their faith, even the salvation of their souls." They seek to be able to say to them—"For ye are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works." And by the blessing of God, their labours are successful. They have converts who are not only instructed by their teachers, but who have "heard and learned of the Father." The law of God is not only in their hands, but is written in their hearts. The light they possess is not phosphorescent, produced by corruption, and indicating death; they have become truly followers of Christ, and they walk no longer in darkness, but have the light of life. And it is to such disciples as these that we must chiefly look. These, in their respective spheres of action, are the lights of the world, and the salt of the earth. It is by them that the true impression of the divine

sealing has been received—by them that, both in example and exhortation, the social law is given to those among whom they live, and who may have only partially admitted the truth which has been declared to them. Human errors and passions will prevent that law from being fully obeyed; but whenever such Christians are sufficiently numerous to attract attention, the law is given, and exerts a most important influence. Thus was it in the beginning of the Gospel, and thus were its first great triumphs won. It was by overlooking this great fact, that spiritual Christians are the only true Christians, and by regarding mental illumination and external profession as sufficient to constitute the Church, that the first steps were taken of the early and long-continued departure from evangelical truth, purity, and power, which every reader of ecclesiastical history so deeply laments. Our argument assumes a return to primitive order and simplicity. The missionaries, whose labours and successes Mr. Backhouse describes, while they rejoice in every impression which they are enabled to make, regard *their* work as undone, unless they see the fruits of that which can only be effected by the *Holy Spirit*.

We again say, that thus it was in the beginning. That, indeed, may be considered as the *highest form* of Christianity which it shall present, when “the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord,” and when the *public mind* of Christian believers, through the continued operation of a faithful ministry, rendered effectual by the promised might of the Spirit, shall be brought to that “unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God,” which St. Paul so impressively describes; when they shall “all come unto a *perfect man*, unto the MEASURE OF THE STATURE OF THE FULNESS OF CHRIST.” Then, too, shall the full influence of Christianity on society be exhibited, in the realization of those almost heavenly prospects which the word of prophecy opens to the faith and hope of the Church. These, however, are the *final results* of Christian influence on the earth. They are continually to be kept in view; but they do not constitute the *primary and immediate object* of Christian effort. That object is, *the personal salvation of man—the conversion of the sinner from the error of his way*. It is in this work of bringing men from the death of sin to the life of righteousness, that the only true foundations of personal religion are laid, and the power of exerting a truly religious influence is exerted. The *leavening power* is then called into existence, and at once begins to act on the surrounding mass. Men must first have the living water within them, as a well springing up into everlasting life, and then, according to Christ’s own saying, “rivers of living water” shall flow forth from them. We contend not for the power of a merely human scheme of religion. Of such systems we not only admit

the failures, but prognosticate them. The true reformation of society can only be effected by what our fathers, with old-fashioned exactness, termed, *a work of grace on the heart*. And at this, the missionaries, whose incipient success among savages Mr. Backhouse very pleasingly describes, continually aim. And on this foundation they seek to raise a noble superstructure. They preach, indeed, that men are saved by grace through faith, but by none is greater stress laid on the divine rule, that they which have believed, should be careful to maintain good works. They not only, in general terms, insist on the necessity of practical holiness, but they *open out* to their converts those minute details on the subject of obedience with which the Scriptures abound. Duty, under all its aspects, whether as relative to God, to man, or to the individual himself, is clearly and impressively described in all that it includes.

We thus advert to the *essential and unfailing tendency* of Christianity. Its *actual operation*, though it always illustrates the tendency, will, however, be modified, sometimes in a considerable degree, by the previous character of the individuals who have been brought to submit to it. Man is the creature of habit; and even when he receives an impulse which moves him in a direction the reverse of that in which he was moving before, allowance must be made for that force which previously moved him. The new force will often be found not to bear him so far as it would have done but for the counteracting power. Still, enough will be done to show most decidedly the proper character of this new impulse. And then, seeing that as a Christian parent, he will communicate Christian instruction to his children, the counteracting force will scarcely exist at all in the rising generation. We refer now, not to our *common nature*, but to *habits contracted*. In each generation, therefore, there will be a decided and rapid diminution of the resisting power, while that which impels will be gathering strength as it advances. Let there be no departure from the fidelity which Christian truth demands, and its influence shall increase in the ratio of a constantly augmenting power; it shall move towards its glorious, predicted consummation with a constantly accelerated velocity.

I. The manner in which Christianity leads men to think, feel, and act, in reference to *their body*, and *their bodily circumstances*, tends powerfully to promote their civilization.

It is impossible that he who has begun to consider all subjects in the light in which Scripture places them, should regard his body as he did before. The light may be comparatively only *glimmering*, but light it is, and the alteration has taken place. That body is the handiwork of God, and he soon learns, not only

that he is fearfully and wonderfully made, but on that very account to praise his Maker. That same body has been honoured by the assumption of one like to it, by man's divine Redeemer. In the case of the true believer, it has become a sacred temple, the habitation of God the Spirit; and on this fact an argument is constructed for controlling all those fleshly lusts which war against the soul, and for preserving the body itself in purity and holiness. That very body, likewise, is included in the arrangements of redeeming love, and he who rightly observes the mercies thence resulting, is inwardly persuaded to present his body as a lively sacrifice, holy and acceptable. In the exercise of the good hope through grace, he waits for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of the body. He knows that the Saviour, for whom he looks from heaven, shall change even his vile body, that it may be fashioned like to His own glorious body. The body shall die, and thus be sown in weakness and dishonour; but it shall be raised again, and flourish in eternal power and glory. Bright as are the prospects before him, they are all associated with the glorification of his body. In his body, though after death, shall he be perfectly and everlastingly happy and holy.

Among the ancient philosophers, especially the oriental philosophers, the notion of *the essential impurity of matter* extensively prevailed, and their moral systems were largely and powerfully influenced by it. Many of the earlier Christians, departing from the simplicity of Christian truth, imbibed these errors, and their deleterious influence soon became apparent. We need not refer to the dogmas of heretics. It was in the Church that the mischief was wrought. By the adoption of unscriptural views respecting the body, a new character was given to personal religion. Thus was the scheme of *the celibate* introduced, and thus were established the austerities of hermits and monks. The Church was beclouded and weakened by its forgetfulness of those sanctifying and elevating statements concerning the body, by which the Scriptures are characterized, and by which they who believe them rightly, cannot fail to be influenced. So far from regarding it as essentially, and in its own nature, evil, they pray that the very God of peace would sanctify them wholly, and that their body, as well as their spirit and soul, may be preserved blameless to the day of Christ. They have learned, in a word, to *respect their body*.

And they have learned this, it may just be added, from a system which in the strongest manner, insists on the necessity of universal purity. Inward purification is described by reference to outward purification; and he whose mind is under the influence of correct impressions on this subject, will not fail to be impressed, likewise, by its visible illustration. He will attach a

real, though a duly subordinated, importance to all those circumstances which may express his sense of the sacredness of his body, and of his obligation to attend to its purity.

And now, bearing all this in mind, let the various tribes of savages which have been seen and described by intelligent travellers, be attentively regarded, and it will at once be understood how complete must be the revolution produced by the admission of such views and feelings. The savage is seldom other than filthy and squalid in his person, clothing, (such as it is,) and habitation. Regardful of little more than the satisfaction of his hunger, he thinks not of the quality, but, of the quantity of his food. Objects which were plainly never designed by nature for human sustenance, he voraciously devours, often gorging himself in a manner all approaches to which will be—we may not say *instinctively*, but *conscientiously*, and as with the rapidity of intuitive perception—avoided by all who have learned from the Gospel that gluttony and drunkenness are sins, and that they who make a god of their belly are enemies of the cross of Christ. Let the accounts given of the Hottentots a very few generations ago, by earlier modern travellers, be remembered. We cannot detail the disgusting particulars of either *how* they ate, or *what* they ate. In the indulgence of the animal passions of their nature, they had become even worse than *bestial*, for there is a natural cleanliness about the beast, of which the human animal seems to know nothing; about which he certainly cares nothing.

In contrast with this—and the contrast is as strongly marked as it is wonderful—let the condition of those whose minds have been enlightened, whose hearts have been affected, by the Gospel, be carefully observed. They have learned both to respect the body, and to place it under that control and government, which are requisite for preventing it from interfering with the holiness of the soul. It would almost seem as though a new sense had been awakened in them—a sense of purity, and even delicacy,—in virtue of which the body, the clothing, will be kept in a state of cleanliness, of which the mind had previously not the slightest conception. Eating will assume a new character, and restraints be imposed on appetite before utterly unknown. Neither will the body any longer be treated with that barbarity which, under the darkness of heathenism, the *pride of adorning* occasioned. There will be no *tattooings*, no savage mutilations, where the body itself is regarded in the manner in which it cannot fail to be by a scripturally enlightened and awakened conscience.

Now, we consider this, though relating to man's inferior nature, as forming one of the most important parts of at least the foundation of civilized life. Dirty, sensual, and brutalized savages

are generally found as wandering, scattered tribes, forgetful of the past, and every way ignorant of the future. Some sort of societies they will indeed form, for man is essentially a social being; but the actual power of the social principle will be at its lowest degree, and a wide space of country will be roamed over by a scanty population, living only to gratify their appetites, and only caring to know the most effectual means which they can themselves command for doing this. Whereas when the body is respected and restrained, as by the Christian believer it will be; when it is regarded as something sacred; when it is associated with every conviction of present obligation, and every hope of future blessedness, the man becomes attentive to personal cleanliness, clothes himself decently, and prepares a clean and comfortable dwelling-place. In regard to this latter, it will often be found that he goes even beyond this. His cottage stands in a well cultivated garden, and its exterior is adorned with some of those beautiful productions of nature of which he previously thought nothing, but which he is led by his new feelings to admire. He has become a being of purity, modesty, and cleanliness; and slightly altering the couplet of George Herbert, we may say of him,

That his mind's neatness has its operation  
Upon his body, clothes, and habitation.

A few sentences from Mr. Backhouse's "Narrative," will show us that these effects have actually been produced, and that in a very short time, among the savages of South Africa.

"The mission at Gnadenal is the oldest in South Africa. At the time of our visit, the number of inhabitants was 1500. Children in the infant school 150; in the girls' school 130; in the boys' school 120; in the adult school 169; and in the school of industry, girls, 24. The village contained the mission-houses and workshops, and about 260 neatly-thatched cottages, of unburnt brick, or mud and gravel, which stand very well in this mild climate. It is prettily situated in a cove amongst mountains, from which several streamlets descend, which fertilize the gardens and other grounds. One of these streamlets turns a corn-mill of two pair of stones, a bark mill, &c. There are many fine oaks, with seats fixed under them, in the part of the village where the missionaries reside. Vines were trained in front of many of the humble dwellings of the Hottentots, and over trellises projecting from the roofs. Fig-trees were growing in their gardens, along with other fruit-trees; here the poor and oppressed, having found a refuge under the banner of the Cross, were literally sitting under their own vines, and their own fig-trees, none making them afraid," (p. 97.) "In approaching Pacaltsdorp, which stands on a plain, its little chapel with a steeple, the school-house, and the dwellings of the missionaries, and cottages of the Hottentots, give it the ap-

pearance of an English village. The little town of George, also, meets the eye pleasantly. As is the case in all the other African towns, the houses are white-washed," (p. 125.) "The valleys about Readsdale are well cropped with Indian and Caffre corn and potatoes, and are interspersed with little villages, formed of the rude bee-hive-shaped grass huts of the Fingoes, the house-shaped ones of the poorer Hottentots, and the neat cottages of those who have become more prosperous. Some of the last would not discredit the more respectable of the labouring class in England. The walls are of brick, externally of that which has been burnt, and internally of such as is only sun-dried; they are plastered on both sides with mud, and white-washed internally," (p. 189.) "Stellenbosch is a pretty town; it had at this time about 200 houses, and 1500 inhabitants; it is situated at the foot of a rugged topped mountain, detached from the main range; the streets have on each side a row of fine oak trees. The principal part of the houses were built in the Dutch style, and white-washed. The cottages of the coloured people were numerous and neat; they formed a pleasing feature of the place. The coloured people were neatly clad; they were a very orderly part of the community, and formed the principal portion of the labourers and servants in the town. The Wesleyans had lately erected a neat chapel contiguous to the mission-house; they had a daily school taught by a young man who had a tinge of colour," (p. 622.) "When the first missionary came here, he found the Hottentots in a most wretched condition, and greatly oppressed: they were almost naked, wearing only a few skins, or a karross, and were living in holes, or in most miserable shelters, in an adjacent sandhill, near to which there was a wood, to which, on the approach of any boors, they fled to conceal themselves, lest they should be subjected to compulsory service. Some of them now have comfortable cottages, but a large number of them live in rude, thatched huts, of interwoven branches and mud; and are in appearance about equal to the people of the lower class in the manufacturing districts of Yorkshire and Lancashire; perhaps on first days their appearance may be superior, *for the Hottentots make themselves very clean to attend public worship.* Many of them have felt something of the power of the Gospel, and while they remain at stations of this kind, they are under Missionary instruction," (p. 128.) "Could the people of Great Britain have seen the effect that is produced here by the operation of Gospel principles, carried out in Christian instruction, in delivering the people from oppression, and in general education, though but of a rudimentary kind, they would no doubt have joined in the exclamation, 'What hath God wrought!' Many of the half-naked, degraded Hottentots had been raised to a state nearly equal to that of the labouring classes in England, and in some respects superior; certainly above that often found in some of the manufacturing districts. They were dressed like decent, plain people of that class; and in the sixteen schools of the Kat river district, which are about half-supported by the people themselves, and conducted by native youths, they had about 1200 scholars, and an attendance of about 1000."—(P. 186.)

Well might Mr. Backhouse say, when contemplating one of the interesting scenes which, happily, his journeyings so frequently presented,—

“It is difficult to a feeling mind to look on this country without emotion, in beholding the hills covered with herds of cattle, and the valleys with corn, and contemplating these as the possession of a people just rescued from oppression, robbery, and spoil, but now dwelling in safety and peace.”—P. 189.

There is plainly and decidedly an incipient and growing civilization. The fields are not, it is true, white unto the harvest, but they are beautifully verdant with the springing corn. A deep, broad, and stable foundation is laid, and the structure to be raised upon it is evidently advancing. Already does the Hottentot, not long ago so wretchedly degraded, prostrate in the lowest condition of humanity, stand upright, respecting himself as a man, while he humbles himself before God as a sinner. The facts are precisely such as the principles would lead us to expect.

The foregoing remarks have referred chiefly to the *individual*. The *social aspects* of the case will still further support and illustrate our argument.

II. Christianity most efficiently promotes civilization by means of the *Social Principles*, which it implants and maintains.

The entire subject is far too vast to be considered in all its details. A few leading facts, however, may be noticed; and while noticing them, we may remember that in the Gospel there are no discrepancies. All there is consistent and harmonious.

Wherever the Gospel exerts an influence such as that is which we have already described, there will be the full establishment, on right principles, of the *domestic constitution*. Where this exists not, society is at least infirm and unsound; it is generally corrupt at the root, and its progress is not only unavoidably impeded, but always connected with undeniable evidences of inferiority and instability. Man is either a homeless vagabond, or he lives in the indulgence of those animal appetites which go to *sensualize* his whole character; to enervate his intellectual faculties, and strengthen in susceptibility and power his passions of resentment and anger; to make him slow and feeble in thought, and quick and mighty in ferocity. In such a state of society, one entire portion of the human species become the degraded victims of the other, whose position is a perpetual temptation to the exercise of a savage tyranny. The whole mass of human society is in great measure deprived of that deep, and powerful, and salutary influence which *woman* was designed to exert. To this all history bears testimony. Polygamy and barbarism have always gone hand in hand.



And here it is that the influence of a genuine Christianity is most decided. Wherever it is introduced, the great law of the Bible, that one man should have his one wife, and that he should dwell with her as being heirs together of the grace of life, that their prayers be not hindered, is established on the best and surest foundations. Nor does it receive a reluctant, coerced submission. The law is written in the heart. The seed of truth is deposited in a congenial soil. What the judgment acknowledges, the affections love. The proper position of woman in society is perceived, and she is at once placed in it. The Christian regards her whom he has chosen to be the partner of his future life, with feelings unknown to the polygamist, whether in the semi-barbarous or completely savage state. She is neither his toy nor his drudge. He knows that he cannot be the petty tyrant of home, and retain the favour of his heavenly Lord. The domestic constitution is established, because the domestic affections are awakened and sanctified. Next to the duties which he owes to God, and indeed immediately flowing from them, the Christian believer regards those which he owes to his family. He is instructed by *the great word*—and this is one principal theme of ministerial instruction, public and private—to rule over it in the fear of God, walking in his house with a perfect heart. He may not provoke his children to wrath, but is required to train them in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. The things which he finds in “the word,” are to be in his heart, and he is to teach them diligently to his children; morning and evening the sacrifice of praise and prayer are to be presented at the family altar. His hallowed dwelling becomes as it were a temple, consecrated to the service of God, and he moves in his family as its anointed prophet, priest, and king.

And as it is by his own family that his chief duties are required, so in the midst of it is it that his chief earthly comforts are enjoyed. Next to those which he derives from communion with God, are those which are supplied by his HOME. Fatigued by earthly labour, harassed by earthly care, in the bosom of his family, with his sympathizing partner, with his smiling, prattling children, he finds relaxation and repose. And if he has to rejoice in some instance of new or increasing prosperity, he feels not the fulness of the joy, till it is shared by his beloved family. Under such an influence man cannot continue to be a savage. He is at least softened and *humanized*; he is more, he is purified and elevated by that *sacred home feeling* which is fixed deeply in his conscience, as one of the elements of his piety. Savagism and home are incompatible. From true Christianity home is inseparable. And therefore does Christianity, as enforcing family obligations, and inspiring the love of family enjoyments, strike at the very

root of savagism. Strictly enjoining personal purity under the most awful sanctions, and the complete subjugation of those appetites and affections of our lower nature, to which the "natural man" completely subjects himself, the Gospel teaches that it is not good for man to be alone, commands him to love his wife as Christ loved his church, to educate his children for duty on earth and blessedness in heaven, and to deal with his servants, if servants he employs, as having himself a master in heaven. Combine this with that self-respect which religion unfailingly produces, while it removes the inflated and ridiculous pride which, as springing from corrupt nature, is found in unregenerate man, whether dwelling in cultivated or barbarous life; and it will at once appear that the wandering savage, yielding to the influence of the Gospel, must become the settled householder, to whom the duties and the comforts of the family are alike sacred; and that in these reclaimed households we have the certain commencement of a living and growing civilization.

But this is not all. Although compelled occasionally to endure severe toil, and to suffer what may sometimes be extreme privation, the predominant habit of the savage is *indolence*. But, take the man who has obeyed the Gospel from his heart, and whose heart, therefore, is truly inclined to follow the directions of the written word, enforced on his serious attention by a faithful ministry. He finds that one of the most explicit of the rules which he is required to observe is, that "if any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own household, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel." We particularly refer to the very positive language of St. Paul in his epistles to the Thessalonians.\* Not only are gluttony, and drunkenness, and dishonesty forbidden, but men are called by the Gospel to an active and industrious prudence for the *regular supply* of their own wants, and of those of their family. "That ye may walk honestly towards them that are without, and *that ye may have lack of nothing*." He who is influenced by these requirements will not trust to the casual and precarious produce of the chase, with its alternations of wasteful plenty, and extreme scarcity, unless in those few and seldom occurring cases in which the necessity that has no law compels him. He is to open the sources whence industry may derive a regularly flowing stream. The earth is to be cultivated, and flocks and herds gathered and tended. They who act according to these laws, will fix themselves in settled habitations; and as the cultivation of the earth, and the regular provision of clothing—setting aside, for the moment, the other wants of society—will require

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\* 1 Thess. iv., 11, 12; 2 Thess. iii., 11, 12.

attention to the mechanical arts, the division of labour will follow as a matter of course ; and thus, not only will there be the framework of civilized society, but the associating with it of some of the most important principles requisite for even a high state of civilization. The feelings inspired by religion have produced a new class of wants. The man looks for a more decent habitation, and more decent clothing. He can no longer eat his meat half raw, tearing it in pieces as it lies on the earth. And these new wants point to new labours. And then comes in another principle. The man who looks no higher than himself, may do his work as he pleases ; but he who is required to do all *as unto the Lord*, cannot allow himself in *carelessness*. True religion leads to skilfulness in working, for it connects working itself with conscience. And from this it would soon follow, as a natural consequence, that one employment, (generally speaking,) should occupy one man ; and thus we have the division of labour, and the bartering, and trading, which political economy, finding the elements in existence, has arranged into a science, and to which evangelical religion is thus seen naturally and easily to conduct. Communities, as well as families, are produced by its influence ; and the line of conduct which it enjoins is precisely that which tends to preserve the community in a healthy state, and to minister to its prosperity. It is not the result of mere power, but a blessing resulting from the established and continual rule of divine providence, that "godliness is profitable to all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come." Mr. Backhouse beheld, not only comfortable dwellings, inhabited by peaceful, industrious, decently clothed, and sufficiently fed families ; but these dwellings collocated into enlarging villages, with their cultivated gardens, and their street oak-rows, their well tilled fields, and their carefully tended flocks and herds. Under the natural influence of evangelical Christianity, Hottentots, within living memory, sunk in the lowest degradation of savagism, are beginning to occupy the position which man's Creator designed him to occupy, and to which some of the most important principles of Divine revelation are found to refer.

In considering these selected instances of the tendency and operation of the *domestic affections*, their social aspects have been unavoidably seen. But the *social principles* implanted and nourished by the Gospel are too widely influential to be dismissed with only incidental notice, while their range is too extensive to be at present fully examined. We must again select a few instances. And of these, the influence is so obvious, the results so universally admitted, that the task of investigation is easy, and may be very soon performed.

The foundation of the whole is found in the fact, that religion,

when considered in the essential simplicity of its nature, consists of love ; and every thing in the evangelical system is designed to bring us to this, or to preserve us in it. Man is to love supremely the Author of his being ; he is to love his neighbour as himself. And wherever the Gospel is obeyed, this sacred affection is awakened and sustained. And need we argue as to its effects ? It is already done for us by the Apostle. "Love worketh no ill to his neighbour ; therefore love is the fulfilling of the law." Euclid furnishes no demonstration more complete, or more obvious. We do not hate ourselves, or seek our own hurt : and if we have submitted to the Gospel, and received its spiritual blessings, as we regard ourselves, so, with the same benevolence, we regard our neighbour. We feel that we can rejoice in the happiness of others, that we desire it, that we are ready to promote it whenever it is in our power. It is therefore saying little that the irascible passions are placed under powerful restraint ; that hatred, malice, revenge, are not only forbidden by the outward rule, but effectually combated by the new principles and motives which reign inwardly : instead of them, the benevolent affections are now established in the soul, and constitute the predominating disposition. The true Christian is, for this reason, *a new creature*, because he is under the full influence of *faith that worketh by love*.

What then must be the effect of this upon man's social condition ? The malignant passions are conquered. There can no longer be hatred, and bloody revenge, and their train of terrible and heart-sickening cruelties. No exposure of infants. No desertion of the sick, the aged, and the infirm. Along with honesty and uprightness, there will be kindness of feeling, courteousness in behaviour. There will be the developments which are described in the often-quoted *thirteenth of Corinthians*. Let that chapter be studied in its details. Let a savage tribe be supposed to be brought, by a faithful ministry, under the influence of its grand affection. So far as this is the case they are *actually civilized* ; and if this be added to what has already been stated in regard to *self-respect*, and the *domestic affections*, the civilizing work will be seen, even in its first subjects, and in its first operations, to have advanced a long way.

But we must refer to two other *social principles* set at work by the Gospel wherever it is truly received. We have purposely confined ourselves to the more obvious aspects of the subject ; there are some which, though less obvious, are scarcely less powerful. We have hitherto only referred to the intercourse between man and man ; but this does not constitute *the whole of society*. For society, government is necessary, and laws must be enacted ; there must, therefore, be legislators and rulers. Now,

without referring to any but the most general views of this subject, it is impossible to read the New Testament without seeing that it is in these respects eminently favourable to social order. Whatever anarchy had previously prevailed, the necessity of agreeing on laws would be *felt* by Christian disciples, and in the New Testament they would find statements admirably calculated to direct them both as to the laws which should be enacted, and the authority by which they should be enforced and executed. The magistrate—therefore there is to be one—is to be the minister of God for good—the sword of justice is committed to him, and he is to be a terror to evil doers, but for praise to them that do well,—he is to discharge the duties of his office in reference to the objects which the Apostle has so well defined—“that we may live quiet and peaceful lives, in all godliness and honesty.” And because this particular constitution of society is designed and appointed by God for human benefit, obedience and support are commands, the obligation to submit to which is laid upon the Christian conscience; and thus rulers, legislators, subjects, are all reminded of their highest duties toward God, while their mutual duties in regard to each, are all placed under the sanctions of religion, and made obligatory on conscience. The magistrate will feel that he is required to be as the minister of God for good to those who, on their part, are required to be obedient not for wrath, but for conscience sake.

And there is something beyond all this, slow, perhaps, in its operation, though that operation commences very early. The great theme of the Gospel ministry is *Christ crucified*. The principal object to which awakened inquirers are directed is, *Christ crucified*. This theme the faithful minister expatiates upon, opening its grand principles, at least, to minds which, because spiritually awakened, are prepared to behold and admit them. Now, here is not only the noblest subject for individual contemplation ever presented to the human mind,—the solution, by Christ's atonement, of the problem, how God can be at once a *just God and a Saviour*—but a subject which, when further investigated, is found to suggest just and noble principles of jurisprudence and law. Even the awakened savage *begins* to understand how, in Christ's death, God both vindicates his law, and causes his mercy to triumph; and as he frequently, and with delighted feelings, contemplates it, it opens to his view, and almost unconsciously he becomes familiar with the loftiest subjects that even angels can study. With such a subject before him, and regarding the dispensation of mercy in that peculiar character in which the Gospel presents it, *as the kingdom of God*, he cannot but experience both mental instruction and enlargement. Just views will thus prevail in society, and principles will be admitted, which, when fully

traced into all their consequences, place before man that system of redemption and government which it has pleased the infinitely wise, holy, and merciful God to devise, and by means of which he imparts such fulness of blessing to his creatures. When these principles are understood, and their influence is felt and obeyed, there cannot be *slavery*—the man who practically views his fellow-man as he appears in the light of redemption, cannot hold him in bondage, nor attempt to play the tyrant. Not only is “*Honour all men*” an evangelical precept, but the Gospel places man in such a light, as loved of God, and redeemed by the incarnation and sacrificial death of the Son of God, that even were not the precept given, the feeling which prompts to obedience would exist. The whole system of government and law which the cross of Christ opens to the view of those whose hearts it has, in the first place, interested, is equally favourable to *true liberty* and *true order*. The Gospel makes man *honourable*, and calls into proper exercise all the faculties of his nature; it is thus highly favourable to liberty: it sets before man his subjection to God, calls for a willing subjection to the Divine authority as expressed in the Divine law, and connecting civil obedience with the obligations and sanctions of religion, lays it directly on the conscience as a Christian duty; it is thus favourable to order. As it gathers men into societies, so does it give to societies their best character and form. And thus, while religion tends, not accidentally, but directly and essentially, to establish such social relations as are obviously most important elements of social civilization, it provides for the very highest degrees of improvement in the social constitution, and is continually bearing men onward on this best, and indeed only safe path. As evangelical developments proceed, not only will the social framework be brought to assume its best form, whatever that form may be, but the whole mass of society will be moved and governed by principles in perfect accordance with it. Tyranny and slavery, rebellion and anarchy, will be alike unknown. Religion at once fixes men in society, and binds them together in comfortable, because honest and courteous intercourse; and then, into the society thus formed, the principles of a jurisprudence, wise, pure, and noble, are cast, which, though their operation be at first slow, shall operate as beneficially as certainly. When men are perpetually demanding their *rights*, angry passions are awakened, and strifes and contentions ensue, in which the weak always suffer *wrong*; whereas, when every man feels on his conscience an obligation to discharge his duty, he is careful to render to all their due, and most careful to render that which is due to the friendless and weak; and when all attend to their *duties*, all shall enjoy their *rights*. And this is precisely the state of things

to which the Gospel powerfully tends. "Owe no man anything but to love one another." "Look not every man upon his own things, but every man upon the things of others."

And the commencement of this work Mr. Backhouse clearly perceived among the converted Hottentots and Caffres of Southern Africa. A brutal polygamy formerly prevailed, but the Gospel has laid the axe to the very root of it; and in the passages already quoted from his "Narrative,"—and many more of a similar character might be given—the observant reader will see plainly that the principles to which we have adverted are already at work, and operating in the direction we have described; so that, were we to pause here, simple as are the views we have taken, yet we believe we have made out our case. The man who experiences a true evangelical conversion is already, in principle, a civilized man, though he were before a savage; while he who only lives to "follow the devices and desires of his own heart," careless how much he "offends against God's holy laws," has, in his heart, the seeds of savagism, however the exterior man may be varnished and polished.

### III. We will only add two or three *miscellaneous illustrations*.

It is a remarkable circumstance, that all who walk in error and falsehood, are punished by the intervention of imposture, and that imposture is often found to be a cruel scourge. We will say nothing of the false miracles by which an usurping priesthood often seeks to maintain its power in some parts of Christendom. We confine our view to South Africa, where the religious tendencies of human nature have been reduced to the lowest degree compatible with their existence; where the savage neither sees God in clouds, nor hears him in the wind; where there is barely a vague, meaningless reference to some unknown spiritual and invisible power. Exposed to seasons of destructive drought, they have their conjuring *rain-makers*, who often exercise a cruel tyranny; and, ignorant both of diseases and remedies, they believe that illness is caused by a sort of witchcraft, which can only be counteracted by the detection and punishment of the bewitching agent. Terrible cruelties are often inflicted by the anti-witch doctors. The entire system, in principle and practice, is one of debasement and barbarity. Mr. Backhouse gives some thrilling instances, for which we must refer to his volume. Now, not only is the Gospel altogether opposed to this, but, as soon as its influence upon the heart is experienced, the power of rain-makers and witch-doctors at once and for ever is broken. The converted savage—savage no longer—knows who gives "the former and the latter rain in their season," and causes "the bright shining of the sun after rain." Im-

posture is detected, and is so exposed, that even the natives themselves, in the neighbourhood of missionary settlements, though not obedient to the Gospel, begin to laugh at the rain-makers, and to defy the witch-doctors. A powerful agency of barbarous degradation is thus weakened as to all; while all who become Christian, experience an entire deliverance from it.

But this should not be regarded by itself. Instead of the savage incantations of rain-makers and witch-doctors, there are established the solemn services of Christian worship. The house of God becomes the centre of the settlement; and is it necessary to point out the civilizing power of the public ordinances of religion? Mr. Backhouse, in a passage already quoted, illustrates this by a brief observation, which is yet highly significant:—*The Hottentots are particularly attentive to decency and cleanliness on the Sabbath day, because they then, congregate for the worship of God.* They who do this sincerely, every time they assemble, will be reminded that God is their father, Christ their Master and Lord, and that they are all brethren. Christian worshippers cannot come from Christian worship, to plunge into the low sensuality, or the bloody animosities, of savage life. The feelings which are associated with Christian worship, will become the feelings of everyday life. When—where, is God absent?

And, with this, another remark may be connected. The important influence of the *Missionary Family* must not be overlooked. When the crystallizing power seems unusually weak in a saline solution, the chemist sometimes throws in a small crystal of the salt, which thus immediately becomes a sort of *nucleus*, attracting to itself the saline particles, so that the process now proceeds as was desired. The Christian Missionary, for love of souls, comes from a far country, renouncing the advantages and comforts of civilized life, that he may dwell among savages, and be an instrument of saving and reclaiming them. He dwells among savages, but he does not become savage himself. As far as is practicable, he has the dwelling of the civilized man, and in all his own movements, and in those of his family, he shows the superior advantages which he enjoys. He becomes, in the locality where he has settled, the *nucleus of civilization*. Savages can see the difference between those who only come amongst them for conquest or gain, and those who come amongst them to do them good. In Polynesia, repeated instances have occurred of this; and Mr. Backhouse mentions facts of like character. Savage chiefs, having no love for the Gospel, yet give the Missionary a kindly welcome, the first motive being a desire to add to their own consequence and power. But when, by the influence of evangelical grace and truth, the Missionary has collected around him a num-



ber of converts, they look up to him as their benefactor and superior, and *the work of imitation* soon commences—that work proceeding all the more rapidly, because the mind is prepared for it by the light which has been received, and the motives which have now been implanted.

Nor must the *intellectual improvement*, consequent on the spiritual reception of the Gospel, be overlooked. Man was made to know God; but the Hottentots and Caffres, when visited by Christian Missionaries, had not the slightest notion of deity—not even enough to make them idolators. They had no idea of any thing beyond their own existence and condition, except, as we have seen, some indistinct feeling on the subject of an invisible power. What an advance is made, then, in the case of those who have the scriptural idea of God, and who perceive in addition, and that in spiritual light, the system of truth with which the scriptural idea of God is inseparably connected! Their mind is now directed to subjects of thought; and while mental activity, generally speaking, is more pleasant than mental vacuity and ignorance, the feelings which are awakened in them render the contemplation of these magnificent truths a most delightful exercise, so that they will desire and strive to increase in the knowledge of God. And then—rapidly glancing at actual facts—the Scriptures are given to them, and they and their children are taught to read; and, taking the Bible as it actually is, what a multitude of questions does it suggest to the aroused curiosity of the long torpid mind. The converted Hottentot, reading his Bible, wishes to know about *other countries* and *other times*. All that his teacher knows, the convert desires to know; and even though he should feel that himself can only just pass the threshold, there are his children, and his own wishes are all in agreement with the plans of the missionary, that schools may be established, and the rising generation be put in possession of all the knowledge that can be communicated to them. In the extracts given from Mr. Backhouse, it would be observed, that at one station there was a boys' school, and a girls' school, and an infant school, and a school of industry. And whoever has attended to the *statistics* of missionary proceedings, will have noticed the uniform attention to education which they indicate. And, without enlarging on the subject, we only say, that where there is education, superintended by missionaries from a country in a high state of civilization, a connexion is opened between what may be termed the two so greatly different levels, and through the connecting channels the streams of knowledge will flow—in this case without lowering the higher waters—till the level be the same in both. Where *such education is*, before very long *there will be a literature*. When the ancient Gentiles, not liking to

retain God in their knowledge, cast off the light which they possessed, their progress to all the confusion and ignorance of the reprobate mind was rapid: and when the knowledge of God is, with humble, but devout and delighted thankfulness admitted, the progress in an opposite direction is scarcely less rapid, and equally certain. Already are *printing presses* introduced to missionary stations among the most savage tribes. Printing presses in cannibal New Zealand! Thirty years ago, what was Fejee—what New Zealand—what were Hottentots—what Caffres? What are they now? Little more than twenty years ago, the New Zealanders, out of revenge, seized on the ship, Boyd, and murdered and devoured the whole crew—more than sixty persons. A year or two ago, an unhappy collision took place between a party of New Zealanders and some British settlers. The New Zealanders had only had a few visits from Christian missionaries. But let the difference be well noted. They only defended themselves; and even in doing so, one of their chiefs strove to prevent the mischief. And when they had obtained the victory, they withdrew; no outrages were committed on the dead. A youthful, unarmed missionary was permitted, without molestation, to commit them to the earth, with the usual and solemn rites of religion. Wherever Christian missions are successfully operating, a civilizing process has most evidently commenced.

From among the many principles which the subject includes, and to which our limits do not allow us particularly to refer, we will only select one more for very brief notice. Christianity, properly understood, directly promotes the improvement of the whole inward man. Its truths are not like mathematical demonstrations, appealing exclusively to the intellect, strictly considered. They include all the subjects into which the human mind delights to inquire. The true, the good, the just, the honest, the beautiful—all which the ancient philosophy sought to know, and which it could never realize—not as vague and cloudy metaphysical abstractions, but as connected with living and personal realities, Christianity unfolds. By the spiritual mind, the truth is loved, as well as known; and the imagination, and the affections, as well as the reason, are called into exercise. Where true religion is, the *poetry of the soul* cannot long be dormant.

Volumes might be written on this deeply interesting subject. The instances we have selected, however, will be sufficient for its elucidation. We only add one or two general remarks.

It must be kept in view that Christianity is a perfect system, every part of which is consistent with all the rest, and with the complete whole. If we have rightly explained its tendency in the instances which we have selected, that tendency will be *the* tendency of the system, inasmuch as in that system, all is cohe-

rent and harmonious. It has not a single counteracting, or even *negative* tendency. That other systems have operated so as to prevent men from falling into savagism is evident, if we only advert to India and China in later days, and Persia, and Greece, and Rome in ancient times. But the civilization was not only in itself imperfect, but intimately connected with much that was barbarous. Here is the triumph of Christianity, and of Christianity alone. It applies a sufficient power to the entire human nature, and tends directly to the improvement of the whole. And especially does it influence what in man was intended to be supreme—his conscience. His intellectual, his social, his moral faculties, are alike invigorated and controlled, and all are placed in due adjustment to each other. Christian influence is, in point of fact, twofold. It promotes and strengthens all in man from which good to himself and others may arise, and it promotes and strengthens nothing else. Personal evils it so restrains and subdues as to prevent their social development. Civilization on any other principle is not only imperfect in itself, but is connected with some of the worst evils of the savage state; whereas Christian civilization is not only in its own nature complete, because it is the improvement of the whole man, so far as he is the work of God, but it so subdues what is evil in human nature, as that, in proportion as it is permitted to act, the barbarous defects which are found in the results of every other system, are prevented. Social evils in modern society spring not from Christianity, but from opposition to it. It is granted that the social state is a mixed one. But its principles can be ascertained by moral analysis, as completely as chemistry can separate any substance into its constituent parts. Let this be done, and what real good can be traced to a principle separate from Christianity; what evil can it be found to have originated? And can there be any other conception of the full results of the complete influence of an entire and unmixed Christianity, than one which likewise represents a nobler civilization than any ever yet beheld in the world? To the mind, and to the nature of man, both as an instructive and as a remedial system, the Christian religion is precisely adapted; and if it be true—and of its truth that precise adaptation is no slight argument—who could have devised a system so precisely adapted to a nature so complicated, and presenting such apparently contradictory aspects, but the Being to whom it is most intimately known?—if it be true, then are its tendencies rendered efficient by the power of the Holy Spirit, and the watchful superintendence of divine Providence. The kingdom of God is compared to leaven which is put into the measures of meal for the purpose of communicating its own nature and properties to the whole. What the result *is likely to be* we can confidently say

by noting the influence of the leaven on individual cases, and that which might be anticipated from the *theory* is realized in the *actual issue*. It is a case of tried experiment, and as is its philosophy, such are its facts. But we are not left to conjectures as to *probable results*. In the volume of prophecy we have the history of the future, and to the benevolence that mourns over the miseries of mankind, most consolatory and delightful is the picture delineated by the pencil of heavenly truth. We wish to behold a state of perfect civilization—a civilization of knowledge and purity, of kindness and peace. We behold it in the final triumphs of Christianity, and in the sacred glories of the latter day; and if we inquire by what instrumentality this shall be brought to pass?—the reply is, even by the universal diffusion of the leaven which produces such happy effects in individuals. The question is one of experimental philosophy. The successful influence of the Gospel on men *personally* considered, both illustrates its character, and proves its power. By Christianity, the true knowledge of the true God is revealed; by Christian faith that knowledge is received so as that both its nature and power are shown in the formation of Christian character; and by Christian compassion and zeal, labouring in obedience to the divine commands, and in humble, yet confident dependence on the divine blessing, that knowledge is sought to be communicated, through the instrumentality of a faithful ministry, to every nation under heaven. As it spreads, the wilderness and the solitary place are made glad, and the deserts rejoice and blossom as the rose; they blossom abundantly, and rejoice even with joy and singing. And whose is to be the praise when, “instead of the thorn shall come up the fir tree, and instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle tree?” “It shall be to the Lord for a name, and for an everlasting sign that shall not be cut off.” The scenes which the “sure word of prophecy” describes shall then be realized, when “the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea.” We say not, therefore, that Christianity *promotes* civilization; this but inadequately expresses the actual truth. An unchristian man is not a truly civilized man. A real Christian has ceased to be a savage. Genuine, healthy, consistent civilization is the aggregate of the individual and social developments of scriptural Christianity.

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**ART. V.**—*The United States of America ; their History from the Earliest Period ; their Industry, Commerce, Banking Transactions, and National Works ; their Institutions and Character, Political, Social, and Literary ; with a Survey of the Territory, and Remarks upon the Prospects and Plans of Emigrants.* By HUGH MURRAY, F.R.S.E. With Illustrations of the Natural History. By JAMES NICOL. Portraits, and other Engravings, by JACKSON. 3 vols. Edinburgh Cabinet Library. Edinburgh, 1844.

MEN commonly form an unfair estimate of the institutions, character, manners and customs, of other nations than their own. The means of judging of a nation fully and fairly are not often possessed by foreigners. A feeling of rivalry and jealousy frequently exists between the inhabitants of different countries, which leads them to lean to the side of depreciating and disparaging their neighbours. Even differences in matters so insignificant, comparatively, as the manners and customs which regulate the daily intercourse of social and domestic life, are apt to excite prejudice, and to produce unfavourable impressions in regard to matters much more important, when a candid and impartial consideration of these differences might convince men that many of the habits and customs of other nations were neither less rational in themselves, nor perhaps less fitted to promote general comfort and convenience, than their own, and were unpleasant and annoying to them, merely because different from those to which they had been accustomed. The United States of North America have perhaps shared more largely than any other country in the injustice with which nations are apt to treat each other in the opinions cherished and expressed with regard to them. The history and institutions of that country are in some respects of a kind fitted to excite not very unnatural prejudice among the nations of the old world, and especially in Great Britain ; and there are still many things in the condition and circumstances of the United States, though we are disposed to regard them chiefly as adventitious and temporary, which afford plausible grounds for an unfavourable judgment to those who are predisposed to regard them with prejudice. We are not sure that either in Great Britain or in the United States have the feelings engendered by the war which terminated in American independence, been altogether obliterated. There are even yet some men in Great Britain who are disposed to look upon the United States merely as revolted colonies which ought

still to have formed a part of the British empire ; and the revival of the doctrines of passive obedience and non-resistance—of “ the right divine of kings to govern wrong,” by the high churchmen of our day—men who talk equivocally of the lawfulness of the Reformation from Popery, and of the advantages which have resulted from it, and who openly condemn the Revolution of 1688 as a “ national sin,”—is not likely to favour the eradication of this view, and of the feelings which it is fitted to produce. And many Americans, on the other hand, are still too much disposed to remember that Great Britain once oppressed them, and tyrannized over them, and to allow the recollection of former injuries to tinge the feelings with which they still regard her ; and this state of mind and feeling is fostered by the practice still kept up in the United States, of reading publicly, on the 4th of July, the Declaration of Independence, which contains a minute and detailed enumeration of all the hardships inflicted upon the colonies by the mother-country. This custom can now have no other effect than to keep alive uncharitable and angry feelings, and would surely be “ more honoured in the breach than the observance.”

The Republican government of the United States has tended greatly to prejudice the subjects of European monarchies against the institutions of that country. If there exist in America a strong tendency to ascribe the ignorance and misery which are to be found in European countries to hereditary monarchy and a hereditary legislature, there is at least an equally strong tendency in this country to ascribe the ignorance and misery which exist in the United States to their republican form of government, and to exaggerate the extent to which these evils prevail, in order to derive from the state of matters in that country an argument against democracy. And there is one peculiar circumstance connected with this matter which has tended greatly to strengthen the prejudice existing in this country against the United States—we mean the notion impressed upon the minds of many worthy persons by the history of the first French Revolution, and not yet wholly obliterated, of there being some intrinsic connexion between democracy and infidelity. It was not very unnatural that the features which the French Revolution presented, should produce an impression of this sort ; but still every enlightened and intelligent man must see it to be a mere prejudice. We know of no Scriptural grounds on which it can be established that monarchy is in itself more agreeable to the will of God than republicanism ; and it cannot be shewn that the views which usually lead men to approve of a republican form of government, have any natural tendency to make them infidels, or infidel views to make them republicans. The connexion be-

tween republicanism and infidelity, at the era of the French Revolution, was the result of circumstances, and not of any natural and inherent tendency in the things themselves. Some of the most eminent English infidels have been the defenders of absolute monarchy; not a few of those who have been most eminently honoured in promoting the cause of religion, such as Calvin and others of the Reformers, were decidedly opposed to monarchical principles; and we have now, in the United States, a body of ministers, many of whom are possessed of superior talents and learning, as well as undoubted piety, and have been highly honoured by God in the conversion of sinners, who yet openly maintain, that upon grounds at once of reason and Scripture, a republic is greatly preferable to a monarchy or an aristocracy. These facts afford no reason why we should change our views upon the subject of government; but they are surely sufficient to expose the folly of the prejudice which many British Christians entertain against the United States, as if their republican institutions either sprung from, or tended to, infidelity. The Declaration of Independence was indeed drawn up by Jefferson, who was an infidel, though he did not venture very openly to avow his infidelity during his lifetime; but Dr. Wotherspoon was its most able and zealous defender, on the memorable occasion when the Congress adopted it.\*

Some one or more of these various prejudices to which we have referred, have influenced most of the British travellers who have visited the United States.† A considerable number of those who have published an account of their travels in that country, have been mere passing visitors, who saw only the surface of things, and, of course, were very liable to be mistaken; while not a few of them have been more anxious to make an amusing and spicy book, by dwelling upon and exaggerating

\* There can be no doubt that French infidelity, i. e. infidelity produced by the writers, and sanctioned by the conduct of France, did much mischief in the United States; but there were always many eminent men in that country who strenuously opposed French principles and French influence, and deprecated any close connexion with Revolutionary France, from its tendency to injure the interests of religion. Among these Dr. Dwight, who so long and so ably presided over Yale College, was conspicuous. He was accustomed, on days of public fasting and thanksgiving—for these have always been, and still are, observed in the United States—to declaim against Revolutionary France, and all connexion with her, in a style which would have been perfectly satisfactory to the most zealous clerical worshippers of Pitt and Dundas. On one occasion, towards the end of last century, he wound up a pulpit philippic against France in these words, “Her touch is pollution, her embrace is death.”

† One exception to this remark may be noticed. Mr. James Stuart of Dunearn, in his travels through the United States, saw, or affected to see, almost every thing *couleur de rose*. We have heard judicious and intelligent Americans confess that Mr. Stuart's book gave too favourable a view of their country.

peculiarities, than to give a fair and impartial view of the general state of matters. And, in this country, we are very apt, when we hear of any thing ridiculous or offensive as existing or occurring in the United States, to put it down as applicable to, and characteristic of, the whole nation, when probably it may attach only to a few individuals, or to some limited district of that vast region. Many people in this country have heard of some of the follies and extravagances which have been propounded and practised in the United States, on the subject of temperance—of some men asserting the direct and positive sinfulness of using any intoxicating or even any stimulating liquor—of some congregations excluding from communion all who were concerned in the manufacture and sale of ardent spirits, and even all who used them, and of some even going so far as to abandon the use of wine, and to substitute something else, in the celebration of the Lord's Supper; and hearing of these things, and knowing little else about the state of matters, they have been ready to regard them as attaching to the temperance movement in general, and to the great body of its supporters, whereas they attach only to a very few individuals, and are repudiated by the great body of the friends of the temperance reformation—a work, the success of which is an honour to the United States, as it has conferred incalculable benefits upon the community. The great body of the ministry in the United States have renounced the use of intoxicating liquors altogether, and are quite able to adduce proof that their temporal and spiritual welfare, and their ministerial usefulness, have been greatly promoted by this abstinence, without falling into any of the follies and extravagances above referred to. About twelve or fourteen years ago we heard a great deal of the abuses and extravagances connected with American revivals of religion, and many of us believed that what seemed to be just artificial contrivances for producing a present and temporary excitement, had the general sanction and countenance of the American Churches, whereas these abuses were but local and partial, and under the name of *new measures*, by which they were usually designated, were condemned and exposed by the great body of the evangelical churches, and have now, in a great measure, disappeared. We have heard of late a great deal of repudiation, and many, no doubt, in this country, have been led to attach the discredit of this dishonesty to the inhabitants of the United States generally, whereas only one of the States, Mississippi, has denied its obligation to pay its debts; and the conduct of this State, as well as that of Pennsylvania (which, without denying its obligation to pay, delayed for a time to make provision for the interest of its debt, though it has done so now,) met with the strongest disapprobation in the community at large.



You meet with no person in respectable society, and you can find scarcely any organ of public opinion in America, that is not cordial and decided in condemning repudiation.\*

There prevails commonly in this country much ignorance of the United States. The Americans are, in general, better acquainted with us, our institutions, literature, history, and geography, than we are with them. We sometimes do them injustice from our ignorance of the extent of their territory, the nature of their internal government, and the origin and circumstances of the population. When Mr. Webster, the celebrated American lawyer and statesman, was in this country in 1839, he paid a visit to an Episcopal dignitary in the north of England. The Bishop expressed his feelings with some warmth against the neglect of the American Government in respect to preventing the outbreaks continually occurring on the frontiers, and said it was their imperative duty to establish a cordon of troops in order to watch over them and restrain them. And how long does your Lordship think this cordon must be, to cover the boundary line between the British colonies and the United States? said Mr. Webster. The Bishop said that he had not particularly examined that point, but that surely the distance could not be very great. I will tell you then, said Mr. Webster, the distance is as great as from this to Constantinople, and back again to Vienna.

We do not usually take sufficiently into account the leading peculiarity of their government, viz. the entire independence of each of the twenty-six States which form the Union, in all matters of internal regulation, and the want of any central power, like the British Parliament, which has absolute control over all; and in this way we are apt to make the nation in general responsible for many things over which neither the general government, nor the general congress have any control whatever, but with respect to which each State is sovereign and independent. The trial of M'Leod for his alleged connexion with the burning of the *Caroline*, after the British Government had formally assumed

\* A respectable newspaper in New York, published in July last, gave some statistical tables, shewing the great want of schools and the low state of education in the State of Mississippi. The general results were, that of the whole population of the State above twenty years of age, amounting, excluding slaves, to 74,000, there were above 8000, or 1 in 9, who could neither read nor write; and that, of the population under 20, only about one-eighth part were attending schools. We subjoin the concluding reflections of the editor of the newspaper, as indicating the general sentiment of the great body of the people and the press of the United States, on the subject of repudiation:—"Will any one longer marvel that Mississippi is a repudiating State? Can any course be more insane, more unjust to the rising generation, than this of keeping people in such wretched ignorance, when they may just as well be educated and intelligent? Why, compared with these repudiators, the Choctaws and Cherokees, whom we have learned to call savage, are enlightened nations."

the responsibility of the act—a proceeding which had very nearly involved the two countries in a war—was carried through by the Governor of New York under popular influence, and in the exercise of State rights, while the general government did all that was constitutionally competent to them to prevent it. This, however, was an anomaly too gross and too dangerous to be continued; and, accordingly, the next Congress, notwithstanding the extreme jealousy which prevails in America on the subject of State rights, wisely and honourably passed what is called the Remedial Justice Act, the object of which was to bring all such questions, involving international relations, under the Federal jurisdiction, and into the courts of the United States, so that it should not be in the power of the authorities of any single State to involve the nation in war. Still there are many things for which only the particular State, and not the nation or general government, is responsible, and any interference with which, either by the supreme executive, or by the national congress, would be a violation of the constitution, and would lead to the dissolution of the Union; and this consideration we are too apt to overlook or forget in the sweeping censures we sometimes pronounce on the great North American Republic.

The United States have had very great disadvantages to contend with in regard to the character and circumstances of their population, and for these we are not always disposed to make sufficient allowance. They were sprung indeed from most noble stocks, the English Puritans, the Scotch and Irish Presbyterians, and the French Huguenots. A nobler ancestry than this the world could not have furnished, and to their descent from these men, and to the principles derived from them, do the inhabitants of the United States owe almost every thing that has hitherto contributed to their prosperity and their virtue, to their greatness and their happiness. But the character of a large portion of those who have emigrated to the United States since they achieved their independence, has been very different from that of the original settlers. Instead of being the *élite*, they have been commonly the refuse and offscourings of the nations of Europe. Instead of being men, who, like most of the original settlers, were animated by the fear of God, and were determined to enjoy the blessings of civil and religious liberty, which in Europe were denied to them, they have most commonly been needy adventurers, and men who fled from justice, without character, without resources, without any wholesome influence to restrain and regulate them. The character of these emigrants has exerted an injurious influence upon the population of the United States, and has tended materially to strengthen the power of evil, and to obstruct the influence of the exertions made to promote the cause of religion and

morality. In several parts of Scotland the religious and moral character of the inhabitants has been grievously injured by the influx of Irish Roman Catholics, and the same cause has operated extensively in the United States. It is understood that about 70,000 persons emigrate every year from Europe to that country, and that about 50,000 of these are Roman Catholics, chiefly from Ireland and Germany; and the influx of such a body tends greatly not merely to increase the relative strength of the Church of Rome, but to degrade the general morality of the community.

The singularly rapid growth of the population of the United States, and its diffusion over such a vast extent of territory, tend also, in no inconsiderable measure, to increase the difficulty of providing an adequate supply of the means of education and religious instruction for the inhabitants, and to obstruct the efficiency and success of the efforts made for accomplishing these objects. The differences in the origin, habits, and circumstances of different portions of the inhabitants, scattered over a territory about half as large as Europe, much of it but recently settled, and having still many of the disadvantages and deficiencies of a new country, render it impracticable to give, with any thing like precision and fairness, general descriptions of the character, habits, and condition of the people. There are about as great differences, in many important respects, between the inhabitants of different States of the Union, as between these of the different kingdoms of Europe. Their free political institutions, no doubt, exert a certain influence upon their character, habits, and condition, and of course tend to produce a certain degree of uniformity; but political government is far from being the only element which contributes to the formation of national character; and the influence of their political institutions, besides that it has not yet operated for more than two or three generations, has been counteracted in all its beneficial tendencies by the existence of slavery in some of the States, and in all of them has been much modified by the operation of other causes. It is, therefore, almost as absurd to talk of the *American* character, even when the word is limited in its application to the United States, as of the *European* character; and yet we often do the Americans the injustice of ascribing to the nation in general, features of character and habits and practices which are to be found only in particular districts, and originate in local and temporary causes, for which the Americans are not, in every instance, exclusively responsible. Indeed, there is probably no portion of the existing population of the United States who are more reckless and unprincipled, whose character and conduct are more fitted to bring discredit upon any community connected with them, than the thousands and tens of

thousands of Irish Roman Catholics, whose character was formed while they were our fellow-subjects, living under the British constitution. One specimen of the place which the Irish Roman Catholics hold in the United States, and of the way in which their influence operates, is to be found in the fact, that a few months ago it was ascertained, that out of one hundred and eighty prisoners confined in the jail at Boston, more than one half were natives of Ireland, while there was only one Scotchman among them. And the British traveller in the United States will often meet with facts which should make him blush with shame at the reflection that the British Government has such a body of subjects as the Irish Roman Catholics commonly are, and make him less disposed to press upon the American Government and the nation in general, the responsibility of all the immorality and degradation that may be found in that country.

Another consideration that ought to be kept in view in judging of the United States, and the neglect of which leads us to treat them with some measure of injustice, is, that the evil which exists there comes out more palpably and more offensively than with us, and therefore appears to be greater in comparison than it really is. There is much more freedom of opinion and of action in the United States than in Great Britain. Men are there less influenced by mere routine, or a merely conventional system of acting, by the habit of continuing to live just as they have been accustomed to do, and as those around them are doing. In this country, men are, to a large extent, ground down or raised up to a certain habit of acting, by the circumstances in which they are placed, and the influences which are in operation around them, irrespective of their own personal principles and tendencies, whereas, in the United States, the actual personal character and principles of the individual usually come out more plainly and more palpably, and are less modified and restrained by routine habits and collateral circumstances.

The evil that is in the hearts of all unrenowned men, usually comes out more palpably in America than in this country, and this produces more frequent and public exhibitions of what is offensive. An irreligious man—one who is destitute of personal religious principle—is practically and at heart an infidel; and if he is not openly professing infidelity, and living in the violation of some of the laws of morality, this is owing to the restraining influence of external circumstances. This indirect restraining influence is not, we think, so powerful in America as in Great Britain, and therefore a larger proportion, probably, of irreligious men make a profession of infidelity, and throw off the restraints of decency and integrity, than in this country. The general standard of outward morality among irreligious men is probably lower

than with us, except perhaps among our highest and lowest classes ; and as in America, as well as in this country, truly religious men form but a small minority in the community, there thus meets the eye and the ear, in general society, more that is unpleasant and offensive. The greater separation, too, between the Church and the world which obtains in America, although right in itself, fitted to promote the interests of religion, and thus ultimately and permanently to benefit society, has a certain tendency for the time to lower the general standard of outward conduct among the mass of men. The places of worship over a considerable portion of the United States, containing the great bulk of their population, are at least as numerous as in this country. It appears that, generally speaking, they are as large and as well filled as in Great Britain, and yet the proportion of communicants is considerably less than usually obtains among our Churches. The Orthodox Congregationalists, who occupy the New England States, that part of the country which has been longest settled and is most fully filled up, have, by the latest returns, 1150 ministers and 160,000 communicants, giving an average of nearly 140 communicants to each minister. The two great Presbyterian bodies, old school and new school, who are dispersed over the whole country except the New England States, have between them 3036 ministers and 280,000 communicants, giving an average of about 92 to each. And the other evangelical churches exhibit a similar proportion ; the smaller bodies, who are not dispersed over the country at large, but confined in a great measure to some particular district in the more populous States, approximating commonly to the Congregational rather than the Presbyterian average. This comparatively small number of communicants is an indication of the greater separation between the world and the professing Church than usually obtains in this country. It implies the existence of a higher standard of character on the part of communicants generally, but it implies also, and tends to produce, a somewhat lower standard on the part of those who are not members of the Church ; and as these of course form a large majority of the community, and constitute the class with whom most travellers come chiefly into contact, an unfavourable impression is commonly received of the general standard of morality as compared with that which obtains among the middle classes in Great Britain.

There are many things in the United States which, from the greater freedom of opinion and action, assume an aspect that is offensive to us, when, in point of fact, things the same in substance, though less fully and palpably developed, exist to as great, or perhaps a greater extent among ourselves. The Unitarianism that prevails in Boston and in the state of Massachusetts, of which

Boston is the capital, has been often held up as a proof of the decay and corruption of religion in that country. But, independently of the facts that it is almost entirely confined to one State, and is very decidedly on the decrease, we think it right to say, that the Unitarianism of Massachusetts is neither more nor less in substance than just the religion which prevailed so extensively in the Continental Churches, and in the Established Churches of England and Scotland during the latter half of last century. On the Continent it was called Rationalism, in the Church of England Orthodoxy, and in the Church of Scotland Moderatism; but in all it was just substantially Pelagian Unitarianism, *i. e.* the natural religion of irreligious men, who had no sound views and no deep and sincere impressions of the doctrines of the Gospel, but who did not find it convenient to throw off altogether a profession of Christianity. The extent to which these different parties went in developing their views, and especially in formally denying the doctrines generally maintained by the Churches of Christ, was regulated much more by their circumstances than by their convictions, and these circumstances favoured a more open profession of error on the Continent and in the United States than in this country; while, practically and substantially, the general preaching and conduct of those classes of British ministers to whom we have referred, were as little influenced by Scriptural views of Divine truth, and did about as much injury to the cause of religion, as those of the Unitarians of Massachusetts; and we are not by any means sure that greater injury would have accrued to the cause of religion, if, in our own country as well as in America, these men had been led to make an open profession of Socinianism. A confirmation of the idea; that the Unitarianism of Massachusetts was just the particular form which a certain state of mind and feeling happened from circumstances to assume, while the same state of mind and feeling, under a somewhat less offensive form, prevailed at least as extensively in the Established churches of this country, is to be found in the fact, that in the neighbouring State of Connecticut, the same state of religion, or rather of irreligion, which in Massachusetts led to a pretty general profession of Unitarianism, was quite satisfied with the preaching and conduct of the Episcopalian ministers who were found in that State, just as it would have been satisfied with Scotch moderatism, and that in consequence professed Unitarianism has never made any progress in Connecticut.

Many other illustrations might be given to show, that things in America, which may seem offensive to us, and produce an unfavourable impression, exist to an equal if not greater degree among ourselves, though perhaps not so fully and palpably developed. But

perhaps it may be said, that this greater disregard of routine habits, hereditary practices, and conventional arrangements, producing, along with other influences that have been referred to, a somewhat fuller development of evil, and a somewhat lower standard of conduct, among those who are not under the influence of personal principle, is both the cause and the effect of a lower state of religion and morality. Now we are certainly not disposed to undervalue the important advantages which in this country we possess in the extensive and salutary influence which, in the great body of the middle classes, established habits and public opinion exert upon the ordinary conduct of very many who can scarcely be supposed to be under the influence of principle properly so called. But still, let this influence, wholesome and useful as it is, be estimated at its proper value. Let it not be taken as a substitute for true moral and religious principle, or as a proof of its general prevalence. And, on the other hand, let not the comparative absence or weakness of it in the United States, and the effects which flow from this, be regarded as proofs of the want of moral and religious principle, which we believe to be about as strong and as general in that country as in this, although, from the causes to which we have referred, its indirect operation upon the conduct of the great mass who are not living under its direct and personal influence, is not so widely diffused as in the land where our lot has been cast.

We have made these observations to confirm and illustrate the general position, that the notions prevalent in this country about many things connected with the character and condition of the inhabitants of the United States, are erroneous and unfair; and that in regard to matters where an unfavourable impression may have some foundation to rest upon, we do not usually make a reasonable allowance for the peculiarities of their situation, and the disadvantageous circumstances in which in some respects they have been placed. We are persuaded that intelligent and impartial travellers in the United States, who have had adequate opportunities of judging, will concur in the general substance of these observations; and we think them of some importance in guarding against the erroneous impressions which the statements of travellers of a different description are fitted to produce.

In proceeding to make a few miscellaneous observations upon the state of matters in America, we do not mean to dwell upon the peculiar political institutions of that country, and the effects of these institutions upon the character and condition of its inhabitants, because a discussion of this subject would require a much more full and lengthened investigation of the existing condition of things, with its remote and proximate causes, than we have had an opportunity of making, and because any opportunity we

have had of judging upon this subject, has tended to confirm our faith in the general truth and soundness of the speculations of De Tocqueville, in his very able work upon Democracy in America, both with respect to the advantages they have derived from their political institutions, and the dangers from that source against which they are called upon to guard. De Tocqueville is a man of much greater talent and fairness, and gave much more time and attention to the investigation of this subject, than any British writer who has yet appeared, and his views are therefore much more deserving of serious consideration by all who wish to understand the political institutions of the United States, and their bearing upon the character and condition of the people.

It can scarcely be disputed that the United States derive some important advantages from their republican institutions, which are not usually realized under a monarchical government, though there is certainly good ground for believing that these are fully compensated by corresponding disadvantages. There are not a few persons in the United States who, Republican as they are, think that in the institutions of that country the democratic principle has been carried too far, and who would not regret to see either some limitation on the right of suffrage, or else some interposition of other stages and barriers than at present exist between the mere voice of the people and the ultimate determination of national laws and national measures. As the friends of a limited hereditary monarchy, we concur in this opinion, and think that there is not a little about the state of matters in America that sanctions it. Still, there is much also about that country which is fitted to lead us to entertain a higher opinion than is usually held by the subjects of monarchs, of the capacity of a people for governing themselves, and to confirm the doctrine, which forms the basis and the substance of all liberal views in political matters, viz. that in order to secure the great ends of government, it is indispensable that the people, whose welfare it should be the chief object to promote, should have themselves a very decided and efficient control over the regulation of their national affairs. When we consider the extent to which the republican principle is carried in the constitution of the United States, when we recollect that there almost every man has an equal vote in the regulation of national affairs, we are more disposed to wonder that the country should be so well governed as it is, that the laws should be so good, and upon the whole so well executed, than that there should be some things which we disapprove of, and which a less copious infusion of the democratic element might have prevented. We think it highly creditable to the intelligence and character of the people of the United States, that upon the whole they should govern them-



selves so well; and we do not believe that there is another country in the world that could stand universal suffrage, that is, that there is no country where the same amount of political power could be lodged in the mass of the people, without leading to much more injurious and disastrous results.

Those who may desire some limitation of the suffrage, or some other check upon the influence of the democratic principle, are of course fully aware that any change of this sort is impracticable, and place their chief reliance for the prosperity of their institutions and the welfare of their country, upon the diffusion of education and the influence of religious principle. Notwithstanding the infidelity and recklessness occasionally exhibited, a respect for religion exercises a very considerable influence over the American community, arising both from the religious principles professed and acted upon by their forefathers, and from the extent to which true religion continues to prevail among them. And this respect for religion exerts a wholesome influence even over their political arrangements. A curious and interesting indication of the existence of this feeling was given at the conventions held at Baltimore in the month of May last, by the delegates of the two great political parties for nominating their respective candidates for the Presidency and Vice-Presidency, at the approaching election in November. They were political conventions, for a merely political purpose, of delegates from all the States of the Union, and yet in both of them a clergyman was asked to open the proceedings with prayer and the reading of the Scriptures, a practice for which in similar circumstances nothing like a precedent could now be found in Great Britain. In April last, when the salaries of the naval and military chaplains were voted in the House of Representatives, a member opposed the grant in an infidel speech, but three or four members not only expressed their abhorrence of the infidelity, but answered the infidel cavils in a very judicious and intelligent way. No member of the British House of Commons would venture to make an openly infidel speech, though many speeches are made there which would probably do less harm to religion if their authors had the courage to avow the infidelity that is in their hearts; but then, on the other hand, we doubt much whether, if an infidel speech were made in the House of Commons, it would have been so boldly exposed and so intelligently answered on the spur of the moment, as the one in question was in the American House of Representatives. The generality of the newspapers in this country would probably content themselves with giving the infidel speech, as a "specimen of Republican America," and omit the answers to it.

It is of course felt in the United States to be indispensable,

that the people should, as far as possible, have the means of fitting them in some measure for the important duties which devolve upon them in the election of their rulers and legislators; in other words, that they should be able to read, and have opportunities of reading fully, on all matters connected with the regulation of their national affairs. Very great and laudable efforts, accordingly, have been made for promoting the general education of the community. This is effected by a general assessment upon the inhabitants. In many of the States these assessments for educational purposes are large, and the provision is consequently ample. Indeed, education is almost the only object for which the people seem to be willing to tax themselves.\* It is generally admitted there, that an obligation lies upon the community to make provision for affording to the young the means of education, and this obligation is to a large extent well discharged. We believe it is now established that, excluding those States which are still subject to the withering blight of slavery, a much larger proportion of the people are able to read, and are at present attending schools in the United States, than in any other country in the world. All due pains have been taken to make the general system of education vigorous and effective. Intelligent and judicious men have been repeatedly sent to Europe to examine into the scholastic system of its different countries, who, on their return to America, have usually published reports of what they had seen, from which we in the old world might derive some useful suggestions.† In the public schools of the United States,

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\* The annual assessment for the support of the public schools in the State of Massachusetts, amounts to a dollar a-head for every individual in the population, while about half as much more is annually paid to academies and private schools. An assessment at the rate of a dollar a-head for the whole population would produce, in Scotland, considerably more than £500,000, and in England above £3,000,000, annually.

† The principal works of this class which have been published in the United States, are the Report of Dr. Bache, President of the Girard College, Philadelphia, on the charitable foundations for instruction in Europe; the Report of Professor Stowe to the General Assembly of the State of Ohio, in 1837: and the Report by Mr. Mann, Secretary to the Board of Education for the State of Massachusetts, giving the results of an examination into the scholastic system of the principal countries of Europe, made in the summer of 1843. Mr. Mann's Report contains some strictures on the schools of Scotland, which are, we think, especially in what concerns religious instruction, exaggerated and unfair; but it embodies much matter well deserving of serious consideration in this country, as well as in the United States. The following is his general summary of the state of education in the principal countries of Europe:—

“Arrange the most highly civilized and conspicuous nations of Europe in their due order of precedence, as it regards the education of their people, and the kingdoms of Prussia and Saxony, together with several of the western and south-western States of the Germanic Confederation, would undoubtedly stand pre-eminent, both in regard to the quantity and the quality of instruction. After these should

education is provided for the community gratuitously, the erection of the buildings, the salaries of the teachers, and the whole of the materials and apparatus necessary for conveying instruction, being provided for out of the general assessment. We are inclined to think, that upon the whole, this is a wise and judicious principle. Although some advantages may result from charging a fee from the pupils, yet it is scarcely possible to carry out the system of exacting fees in any scheme that professes to provide for the community in general. There must be very many parents in every community, who, while they would like to see their children educated, are neither very able nor very willing to pay for it, or at least to pay for as much of it as would be desirable, and in regard to whom the exaction of a fee would be an obstacle in the way of their receiving education, and thus so far defeat the object for which the community provided the means of instruction. That some should pay a fee, and others at the same school receive gratuitous education, would have an injurious effect upon the attendance of both classes, and thus injure the popularity and efficiency of the schools. The advantages which are conceived to result from the exaction of fees, in inducing parents to take more interest in the regular attendance and the proficiency of their children, may surely be secured to a large extent by other means and influences, whereas the benefits of education to the whole children of a community can scarcely be secured except by gratuitous education; while a liberal remuneration to the teachers, and an efficient system of inspection and superintendence by those who have the power of appointment and removal, will secure all that can be secured in point of qua-

come Holland and Scotland,—the provision for education in the former being much the most extensive, while in the latter perhaps it is a little more thorough. Ireland, too, has now a national system, which is rapidly extending, and has already accomplished a vast amount of good. The same may be said of France. Its system for national education has now been in operation for about ten years, it has done much, and promises much more. During the very last year, Belgium has established such a system; and before the Revolution of 1830, while it was united with Holland, it enjoyed that of the latter country. England is the only one among the nations of Europe, conspicuous for its civilization and resources, which has not, and never has had, any system for the education of its people. And it is the country where, incomparably beyond any other, the greatest and most appalling social contrasts exist,—where, in comparison with the intelligence, wealth, and refinement of what are called the higher classes, there is the most ignorance, poverty, and crime among the lower. And yet in no country in the world have there been men who have formed nobler conceptions of the power, and elevation, and blessedness that come in the train of mental cultivation; and in no country have there been bequests, donations, and funds so numerous and munificent as in England. Still, owing to the inherent vice and selfishness of their system, or their no system, there is no country in which so little is effected, compared with their expenditure of means; and what is done, only tends to separate the different classes of society more and more widely from each other.”—P. 84.

lification, diligence, and activity on the part of the instructors. The public schools in the United States are under the superintendence and management of school committees, chosen sometimes by the municipal authorities of the district, sometimes by the people, and sometimes partly by the one and partly by the other. So strong and so general is a sense of the benefits of education, that, as some would say, *notwithstanding*, but as we are rather disposed to say, *because*, of its being gratuitous, a very large proportion of the youth of the community are attending the public schools. In the published Report of the Controllers of the Public Schools of Philadelphia for 1843, it is mentioned, that "more than 33,000 children, or three-fifths of the whole population between the ages of five and fifteen, now frequent the public schools, and that large numbers of applicants are found seeking for admission, more rapidly than vacancies occur or new schools can be formed." There is a principle commonly acted upon in regard to the schools of the larger towns, which is found to exert a very wholesome influence on the teachers, the parents, and the scholars; it is that of having a gradation of schools, through which the children pass in succession, a fair amount of proficiency at the lower being necessary before they are admitted into the higher; and admission into the highest, where they receive a classical education, being in all cases the result and the reward of superior proficiency in all their previous studies. Thus, in Philadelphia, they have a system of primary schools, into which of course the children are admitted indiscriminately; then a system of secondary schools, into which the children are not admitted until they have made a certain degree of proficiency in the primary; then a system of grammar schools, composed of those children who are found to have made due proficiency at the secondary; and lastly, a high school, where the higher branches of education, including classics and mathematics, are taught, and into which those only are admitted who have distinguished themselves at the grammar schools. In this way, all children, whatever may be the circumstances of their parents, who exhibit talent and an aptitude for learning, have the benefits of a full and liberal education within their reach; the whole scheme of education for the city is brought within the range of a comprehensive system, and of deliberate and efficient superintendence, and strong and powerful motives to a diligent and faithful discharge of their respective duties are brought to bear upon teachers, parents, and children. The average annual expense to the community of the education of each of the 33,000 children attending the public schools in Philadelphia, is only twenty-four shillings sterling, including not merely the cost of tuition, but fuel, books, stationery, and supplies of every description. In this

estimate are included the expenses of the High school, though the average annual expense of each pupil attending the High school, taking that department by itself, is about £9. The instruction in many of the public schools is so well-conducted that it is quite common, even in large towns where private instructors are to be found, for persons to send their children to the public schools, who are both able and willing to pay for their education, and this of course tends to do away the idea of their being charity or pauper institutions. And indeed, we believe that the principal reason why gratuitous education has not usually succeeded well in this country is, because it has been tried only on a very small scale, and has been confined almost entirely to the poorest classes, to the exclusion of all who were able to pay school fees. On this account, the system, so far as it has been attempted in this country, has had a repelling and degrading effect; whereas, in the United States, it is looked upon as a provision made by the community for the general benefit of the community, to which all the taxable population contribute according to their means, and thus there is no feeling of degradation connected with education in the public schools.

It will readily be supposed that the difficult and perplexing questions connected with religious instruction, which have recently been discussed in this country, have also been agitated in the United States. As there is no established church or dominant sect, and as the assessment for the support of the schools is levied indiscriminately from all classes of the community, there is, of course, nothing sectarian in the choice of the teachers, or in the character of the instruction, in other words, religion properly so called is not taught in the schools. In the situation in which that country was placed, the only alternatives were, either to make no public provision for the education of the community, or else to omit the inculcation of religious doctrines, leaving it to the Churches to provide, in whatever way they might think best, for the religious instruction of the youth connected with them. It is right, however, to mention, that it is quite common in the public schools to spend a quarter of an hour in the morning, at the commencement of the exercises, in the reading of the Scriptures, and the prevalence of this practice is a favourable indication of the general state of public sentiment, especially as it has given rise to much controversy and contention with the Roman Catholics. In one or two cases the Roman Catholics have had influence enough to secure for themselves a share of the public grant to be spent in the erection and maintenance of schools conducted upon their own principles, and in accordance with their own views. But in most districts the majority of the people have, in the meantime, held the position that the reading of the Bible is

not sectarian, and have determined that the practice is to be continued in the public schools. This has led the Roman Catholics to set up separate schools at their own expense, and to make great efforts to render them efficient and popular, and this is one of the agencies which has contributed to promote the influence of the Church of Rome. It is of course open to the Churches either to take advantage of the public schools for the secular instruction of their children, and to provide separately by Sabbath schools or otherwise for their religious training, or to establish separate schools of their own where instruction in the peculiar doctrines of Christianity and in the peculiar tenets of the Church, may be communicated in connexion with secular education. The former has been the course usually adopted, except by the Roman Catholics, who object to the reading of the Bible in the public schools. But a feeling is growing in other Churches that it is injurious to the young to have their religious and their secular education so much dis severed from each other, and that the Churches are called upon to do more than they have hitherto done to have the secular education of the young under their care connected with and based upon religion; and several of them are seriously meditating the establishment of a system of Church schools for the instruction of the youth of their own communion. Whether this idea may be carried out, and, if it be, what may be its effects upon the system of public schools, upon the relations of the Churches to each other, and on the general welfare of the community, it is impossible to foresee; but one thing is manifest, that the experience of the United States concurs with our recent experience in this country, in proving, that the whole subject of the establishment of a general system of education for a community divided among a variety of religious sects, is attended with greater difficulties than many among us have been willing to allow; while at the same time, it seems to point to the conclusions—1st, That it is scarcely possible for the State, in ordinary circumstances, to introduce and establish, *de novo*, a general system of education for a community divided among a variety of religious sects, that shall rest upon a religious basis; and, 2d, That the Churches themselves must in one way or other undertake and provide for the religious education of the youth connected with them.

We have been led to advert to this matter in illustrating the position, that a strong sense of the necessity and benefits of education exists in the United States, and that great efforts are made and large expenses incurred in securing the means of education to the community. This remark, however, applies only to the Free as distinguished from the Slave States. States, whose statute book is disgraced by enactments prohibiting slaves being

taught to read, may be justly supposed to have little education themselves, and to be incapable of appreciating the obligations connected with it, and the benefits resulting from it. We have already seen something of the condition of the Slave State of Mississippi in regard to this matter, and even Virginia, which has been the longest settled, and is altogether the most civilized and respectable of any of the Slave States, has not yet established any general system of public education.

It is necessary not only that the people should be educated, but that they have the means of reading fully on all matters connected with the regulation of public affairs, and these are supplied by the newspapers and the periodical press to an extent of which in this country we have scarcely any conception. Every little town has its newspaper, and there is no place of any importance where the great body of the people are not in the habit of reading a newspaper which is published daily. The reading of the newspaper is looked upon not merely as an amusement, but as a part of every man's business, to which a portion of each day is, as a matter of course, devoted. In every considerable town there are several *dailies* published, and there are two classes of them, the larger, and generally the more respectable, cost a penny, and the smaller, many of which are less reputable, cost only a half-penny. In this way a great deal of information upon all public questions is circulated through the whole community; and we have no doubt that a vastly greater proportion of the inhabitants of the United States have opinions upon all public questions, and are able to state and defend them in an intelligent and sensible way, in short, can discuss politics respectably, than in this country. There is also acquired in this way, and generally diffused, a larger acquaintance with the political affairs of Europe, and particularly of Great Britain, than we commonly possess of those of America. The more intelligent and educated classes, however, do not trust to newspapers for information about European literature and politics, but are much in the habit of reading our reviews and other periodicals of a higher class. Most of the leading British reviews are republished in America, and are sold much cheaper than in this country; our half-crown magazines being generally sold for ninepence, and our six shilling quarterlies for two; and we have reason to believe, that about as large a proportion of men connected with the learned professions are in the habit of reading four or five of our leading reviews as are to be found even amongst ourselves.

A great deal is said in this country about the corrupt state of the newspaper press in the United States, and there can be no doubt that unrestrained liberty in this respect has to a considerable extent degenerated into licentiousness; but we are persuaded

that this too, like many of the other evils existing in America, has been exaggerated. There is a recklessness in the abuse of public men, and of candidates for office, which is not common in this country; and there are outrages upon public decency, in the shape of advertisements of quack medicines, such as never have been attempted here, and would not be tolerated by public opinion; but still the general state of the newspaper press, as indicated by the casual perusal of all such newspapers as happened to come in our way, was not so bad as we had been led to expect; and we fear that even the worst of them might be matched in most respects by some of the widely-circulated Sunday Journals of London. And it should not be forgotten, that if the press in the United States is often employed for evil, it is also vigorously and energetically employed for good, and that by its instrumentality a great deal of matter fitted to promote sound moral, and religious principles, is widely diffused through the community.

By the general diffusion of education, and the absence of all taxes upon knowledge, a large amount of intelligence and of information upon all topics of public interest is spread through the community, and the mass of the people are upon the whole fitted for the important political functions which they are called upon to execute, more fully than we in this country find it very easy to believe.

The leading practical defects connected with the management of public affairs in the United States are the occasional interferences of popular feeling, exhibited sometimes even in the verdicts of juries, with the ordinary execution and administration of the laws, and the occasional outbreaks of popular violence which the civil authorities have sometimes neither force enough nor courage enough to prevent or suppress. These are great defects; and as they interfere with the security of life and property, which is one great end of government, it is an imperative duty which the people of the United States owe to themselves and to the world, to adopt, if possible, some efficient means of preventing or remedying these evils. Still, even about the incidents of this sort that occur sometimes in the United States, offensive as they are to us, who are so familiar, both theoretically and practically, with the absolute supremacy of law in all questions of person and property, there are often some palliating circumstances which should not be altogether overlooked in the estimate we form of them. In many cases of these popular interferences with law and order and the peace of society, there has been some sound notion, some wholesome feeling, in the mind of the people, the perversion or misapplication of which, led to the violence of which they were guilty. Interferences with the ordinary execution and administration of the laws, have usually originated in a popular impres-



sion, whether well or ill founded, that by some legal technicality an accused party was likely to have a punishment inflicted upon him either more or less severe than justice and equity, and the general moral feeling of the community seemed to warrant, and have thus been somewhat analogous in their character and complexion to the execution of Captain Porteous by the inhabitants of Edinburgh—an incident in the history of the city which, though undoubtedly a crime, we presume its present inhabitants do not look back upon with any very deep sense of shame or degradation. Such interferences with law and order are utterly unjustifiable, and ought to be put down; but still they are not to be confounded, especially when viewed as indications of national character, with mere reckless and unthinking love of violence, or the mere indulgence of brutal cruelty. They have never, in the United States, assumed that fearfully offensive form of positive sympathy with murder and murderers, which, in certain parts of Ireland, has sometimes saved the most desperate criminals from the punishment they deserved, by rendering their apprehension or conviction impossible.

The occasional outbreaks of popular violence too, have usually had their origin in some right feeling perverted and misapplied, and have been exhibitions of a sort of wild justice. A few years ago a nun escaped from a convent near Boston, and detailed the bad usage she said she had received; this stirred up the indignation of the people of Boston, who went out and set fire to the convent. The recent riots in Philadelphia originated in the attempts of the Irish Roman Catholics to get the Scriptures expelled from the public schools, and in the strong feelings of indignation and jealousy which these attempts excited in Protestants, who had more zeal than knowledge, but who were anxious to preserve to the community the blessing of an open Bible. The late rising of the populace at Nauvoo, and the murder of that vile impostor, Joseph Smith, the Mormon prophet, which grew out of it, originated in the tyranny which he and his followers were exercising over the surrounding country, combined with the fact that he had become rather too powerful to be controlled and restrained by the ordinary executive. Something similar is to be found attaching to most of the cases of popular outbreak that have taken place in America. We are not aware that the history of the United States exhibits any outbreak of popular violence so thoroughly disgraceful as the riots which took place a few years ago in Bristol. These Bristol riots originated in sheer love of violence and rapine, and had nothing like the pretence of a good motive, or the appearance of a right object, to palliate or excuse them. Such riots could not have occurred in the United States, just because that country does not contain in

any one of its cities or districts so large an amount of concentrated and unmitigated blackguardism—such a mass of men who have nothing to lose and who have all the recklessness of utter destitution, as may be found in some of the large cities of this country.

But still, though it is fair to have regard to these considerations in judging of events that sometimes occur in the United States, it cannot be reasonably denied that there is too little *government* to afford full security for life and property, too little provision for the enforcement of law and the preservation of peace and good order, and too great a tendency on the part of the rulers to leave the exercise of their functions in abeyance. Some Americans are disposed to indulge in speculations about the general diffusion of knowledge and virtue coming at length to supersede the necessity of law and government altogether. Whatever plausibility there may be in such speculations, and whatever may be the state of matters in the millennium, it is very certain that in point of fact, the time has not yet arrived, even in the United States, when they can be safely or conveniently acted upon in practice; and we rejoice to find that since the recent riots in Philadelphia, the civil authorities of that city have adopted decided measures for raising and maintaining a force that may be adequate to prevent the recurrence of such disturbances, or at least to bring them to a speedier termination.

Something more than mere education, however, is necessary in order to make the United States or any other nation prosperous and happy, viz. the general diffusion throughout the community of religious and moral principle. It is upon this that national as well as individual happiness depends, and just in proportion to the extent of this influence does any nation possess the true elements of greatness and prosperity. There can be no reasonable doubt that it is to the influence of Christianity, direct and indirect, that the small, and once very insignificant island of Great Britain owes the commanding position which it has long occupied among the nations of the world; and there can be just as little doubt that the United States are indebted to the same cause for the great influence and prosperity to which they have already attained. And we should never forget, when we think of America, and of the feelings with which we ought to contemplate her, that she is the only country in the world, except Great Britain, where the religion of Jesus Christ can be said to have at present any considerable influence, where there is any very considerable number of persons who can be fairly regarded as acting from a real conviction that they are under law to Christ. There is certainly no country in the world, except Great Britain, that can be compared with the United States, with respect to the proportion of its inhabitants who may be fairly regarded as living

under the influence of religious principle, and though, from causes to which we formerly adverted, the indirect influence of religion upon those who are not living under its personal sway, is less widely diffused over general society than in this country, there can be no doubt that the influence of religion, both direct and indirect, is immeasurably greater in the United States than in any country in the world, except our own.

We have said that Great Britain and the United States are the only nations in the world that admit of being compared together with respect to the general diffusion of religious and moral principle; and though we are fully aware that a fair comparison between them would need a much fuller, and more careful investigation into the interior state of both than any inhabitant of either is ever likely to have an opportunity of making, yet we must say that we think that Great Britain, notwithstanding her greatly superior advantages, could not establish any very palpable or decided superiority in the comparison. It appears from the latest returns, that in 1843 there were above 17,000 ministers connected with evangelical churches, excluding, of course, Roman Catholics, Universalists, and Unitarians, labouring in the United States among a population of nearly 19,000,000, thus affording an evangelical minister to about every 1100 of the entire population—a much larger proportion of ministers to the population than are to be found in Britain, as large a proportion as exists at present in Scotland, and a much larger proportion than were to be found even in Scotland before the recent disruption of the ecclesiastical Establishment, or than, but for that event, would probably have existed there for many years. It is true that a considerable number of these ministers, especially among the Methodists and Baptists, are men who have not received a liberal education, but we believe the great body of them are pious and devoted men, who are not unsuited in many respects to the situations they occupy, and who are honoured by the Head of the Church as the instruments of spiritual good.\* The evange-

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\* It is proper to mention that the Methodists and Baptists are now making much greater exertions than they once did to secure an educated ministry. The Presbyterians, to their honour, have strenuously resisted attempts which have been sometimes made in consequence of the exigencies of the country, to lower the standard in this respect, and have always refused ordination to men who did not possess the knowledge that is commonly understood to indicate a liberal education. They do not indeed exact attendance upon a prescribed curriculum as indispensable in every case, but they insist upon the possession of the knowledge, in whatever way it may have been acquired. A few years ago, a Presbytery in the West ordained some men to the ministry who had not received a liberal education. The General Assembly refused to sanction the ordination. This led to a separation. The seceders assumed the designation of Cumberland Presbyterians, from the name of the district where they were chiefly settled, and have now about 450 ministers, many of them of course uneducated.

lical Churches of the United States certainly do not present to any considerable extent the fearful spectacle which the Established Churches of this country and the Continent have too often exhibited, of ministers subscribing articles which they did not believe and teach, and palpably falsifying by the whole tenor of their subsequent conduct, the profession which they made at their ordination, that they were "moved by the Holy Ghost," or, "chiefly influenced by zeal for the honour of God, love to the Lord Jesus Christ, and a desire of saving souls," to enter upon the office of the ministry.

The Presbyterian and Congregational ministers in the United States, are in general as well educated, and as intelligent and accomplished, as those who hold the sacred office in this country. We are disposed to think that they commonly manifest a fully higher measure of mental activity, and this arises partly from the greater general stimulus to activity and exertion in every department, by which the whole community is there pervaded, and partly from the way in which their education is usually conducted. There is in the American colleges and theological seminaries less of that mere lecturing *ex cathedra*, which has usually been the great staple of academical labour in our Scottish Universities, and which left a considerable portion of the students in a state of intellectual dormancy, and more of mental training, by means not only of examinations and frequent exercises, but by there being much more of discussion, upon all the topics that enter into the course, between the professors and the students. It is not uncommon to have something resembling the old *disputationes*, in which the students state their difficulties or propose objections, and the professors are expected to remove or solve them. This practice is of course somewhat trying to the professors, and unless managed with great ability and skill on their part, may be fitted to foster a habit of cavilling, and a love of mere disputation and display, on the part of the students, but it is manifestly useful as a mere intellectual exercise, and tends greatly to sharpen and stimulate the mental powers. Its effects, we think, have been good upon the whole, though not unmixed with evil, and it has certainly tended, among other causes, to produce a high general standard of mental activity, among those who have gone through an academical and theological curriculum. The number of ministers preaching Jesus Christ and him crucified, who are labouring in any community, and the general fitness of these men for the office they fill, may usually be regarded as a pretty fair index of the state of religion, and when tried by this test, the United States need not shrink from a comparison with Great Britain, if, as is quite fair, Ireland be put in on the one hand, to counterbalance the Slave States of the South, and the half-settled States of the West, on the other.

The general observance of the Lord's day, is another index of the state of religion, and though some allowance may need to be made here, for a consideration formerly adverted to, viz., that the indirect influence of religion upon those who are not religious men, is less felt in the United States than in this country, and that there men are more in the habit of acting freely upon their own personal views and feelings, unrestrained by the opinions and conduct of others around them, still we do not believe that upon the whole the United States fall very much below England and Ireland, in this important particular. The state of Sabbath observance in the large towns of America, as it strikes a stranger in passing along the streets, is, we would say, intermediate between the state of matters in this respect in the large towns of England and of Scotland; better, we think, upon the whole, than in the Southern, though rather worse than in the Northern division of our island. It has, we believe, been not very uncommon in America, for the men employed in the formation of canals, railways, and other public works, to labour for seven days in the week, an outrage upon religion and decency, with which this country has not yet been disgraced. But the present tendency in America is towards a better observance of the Lord's day, while in this country, the current, we fear, is running in an opposite direction. The following testimony upon this point is given in the Report of the American Sabbath Union, published in April of this year, and we have no doubt of its truth.

" The transportation of the mails on the Sabbath has, on numerous routes, been discontinued; and stage-coaches, steam-boats, rail-cars, and canal-boats, have, in many cases, ceased to run on that day. Stockholders, directors, distinguished merchants, and civilians, have expressed their convictions that, should this be the case universally, it would greatly promote the welfare of all. The number of those who go, or send to the post-office, who are disposed to labour, or engage in secular business, travelling, or amusement on the Sabbath, is diminishing, and the number is increasing of those who are disposed to attend the public worship of God. Sabbath-breaking is becoming more and more disreputable, and is viewed, by increasing numbers, as evidence of a low, reckless, and vicious mind. The conviction is extending, that it is not only morally wrong, but is unprofitable and dangerous. And should all the facts with regard to this subject be known, and duly appreciated, that conviction, we believe, would become universal. Labourers, in many cases, refuse to work on Sabbath. They view it, as it actually is, as a *degradation* to be thus singled out from the rest of the community, and obliged to labour when others are at rest. They find it to be hurtful to themselves and their families. It injures their health, corrupts their morals, and increases the danger of their being abandoned to infamy and ruin.

Some who, in consequence of refusing to labour on the Sabbath, had been dismissed from their employments, have afterwards been sought for, and employed again, and warmly commended for their attachment to principle, and for their fidelity and success in the discharge of their duties."

The last sentence in this extract suggests to us the observation that the facilities for promoting the better observance of the Lord's day in the United States, are greatly increased by the facts, that the body of the people are much more independent, not only in their feelings but in their circumstances, than in this country, that they are not nearly so dependent upon the wealthier classes, and that, what is in many respects an unspeakable blessing, men who are able and willing to work, have a far greater certainty of being able to procure a decent livelihood for themselves and their families. The working-classes, though certain, when not under the influence of religious principle, to mispend the Sabbath, and to fail in applying it to its proper purpose, are not likely to spend it in ordinary labour, except when this is required of them by those on whom they are dependent for subsistence.

In other matters, too, than Sabbath observance, the influence of religion generally seems to be upon the increase. The great revivals of religion which took place in the early part of this century, and which were followed in the main by the most salutary results, led also, in some parts of the country, to considerable excesses of extravagance and fanaticism. These again produced a certain degree of reaction in favour of coldness and rationality. But this, too, has in a great measure passed away, and the churches, we think, are now profiting by a judicious improvement of the history of religion for the last generation, avoiding excesses and extremes, and labouring with zeal, and yet with prudence, in the great work of their calling. The progress which the Church of Rome is making in some parts of the country, especially in the West, is exciting considerable alarm, and thus contributing to unite the evangelical churches together, by a sense of common danger and common duty, and concentrating their attention upon those important topics which are involved in the controversy between the apostate Church of Rome and the true Church of Christ. This result is also promoted by the wide diffusion of Puseyism and ultra High-churchism, in its most offensive form, among the Episcopalians of America. The Anti-evangelical and Romanizing tendencies of High-churchism are more fully developed in the Episcopal Church of America, than even in the Church of England; and the evangelical party as a body, though there are some noble exceptions there as well as here, seem to be about as deficient in courage and energy, deci-

sion and public spirit, as they are in our own land. The extent to which the Puseyites there have carried out their principles, has not only united the Churches more closely together, but has made the controversies which they have been obliged to carry on against their High-Church assailants, and which have been conducted with much ability and intelligence, turn not merely upon questions of church government and order, but on matters intimately connected with the true ground of a sinner's hope, and the real nature of genuine religion.

It may be fairly regarded as an indication of the growing influence of religion and religious men, that the Whig party have selected, as their candidate for the Vice-Presidency at the approaching election in November, Mr. Freylinghuysen, who has long been known as a decidedly and consistently religious man, an elder and a Sabbath-school teacher in the Presbyterian Church, and a zealous supporter of all schemes directed to the promotion of true religion. The election of Mr. Clay and Mr. Freylinghuysen, the former as President, and the latter as Vice-President, will be supported by the great body of the religious men in the community, and by the great majority of those who are anxious for a steady and efficient government, conducted upon rational and well-defined principles, as opposed to merely temporary popular feeling and present apparent expediency. The election of these men would be highly honourable to the people of the United States, and would go far to refute the charge that has often been adduced against them, of giving their votes only to men who have secured their favour by mean subserviency and flattering their prejudices, and would augur well for the prosperity of the nation, and the stability of the government.

As our leading object in this article is to convince our readers that some of the notions commonly entertained in this country regarding the United States, require to be modified, and that a more favourable estimate than usually obtains among us would also be a fairer one, we would now make a few observations upon some of the particular defects or infirmities which are generally regarded as peculiarly characteristic of our American brethren, omitting any further reference to their political institutions, as we have already said all that we think necessary or expedient upon that point.

It is commonly understood in Great Britain, that the Americans are distinguished for their self-complacency and self-conceit, and their disposition to boast about their country. That they love their country, think very highly of its institutions and capacities, indulge in very sanguine anticipations of its future greatness and prosperity, and express freely, and sometimes, as might be expected, foolishly enough, their views, feelings, and expecta-

tions on this subject, is true; but, after all, we are not sure that they are much more unreasonable and ridiculous in this respect than some other nations that might be mentioned. There is a great deal in the history, condition, and prospects of the United States, which is fitted not unreasonably to call forth complacency in regard to the past, and bright anticipations in regard to the future. One of their authors has said, that "God sifted three kingdoms to sow the American wilderness with the finest of the wheat;" and there can be no doubt that their ancestors were to a large extent the best men whom the three kingdoms at the time contained. Almost every thing connected with the origin, management, and results of the War of Independence, was as honourable to America as it was discreditable to Great Britain. Since that time the increase of the population, and the growing development of the resources and capacities of the country, the diffusion of intelligence, activity, and enterprise through the community, have greatly surpassed any thing of the kind which the history of the world had previously exhibited. The resources of the country are immense and incalculable, and there is a spirit of activity and enterprise in operation, which may not unreasonably be expected to develop them to a wonderful extent. In these circumstances, it is not surprising, that along with the buoyancy and vigour, there should be also some of the boastful presumption and self-confidence, of youth. There seems to be a period in mens history when most of them exhibit something, more or less, of self-conceit, presumption, or puppyism, viz. when they are conscious of the growth and development of new powers and capacities, but not quite sure that others are yet prepared to admit their claims and pretensions to the possession of them. Something similar occurs in the history of nations. The Americans have been fully conscious of the growing strength, influence, and prosperity of their country, but they have been annoyed by the suspicion that their just claims are not yet fully admitted and appreciated by the nations of the Old World. This has operated in the same way as a similar feeling often does among young men at a certain stage of their history, in producing something of an exorbitant disposition to urge their own claims, and a somewhat morbid sensitiveness as to the way in which their pretensions may be received. To whatever extent this feeling may have operated in time past, the Americans are now fully warranted in laying it aside. They are fully warranted in believing that they have become a great nation—that they have attained a very high place among the nations of the world—that they need not now be very greatly concerned about the opinions which other nations may entertain of them—that they may condescend to learn some things from other countries without any fear



of being looked down upon by those whom in some points they may initiate—and that they should just quietly and steadily go on extending the blessings of religion, education, and good government, in the confident expectation that, through the Divine blessing, their country will yet become much greater and more prosperous than it now is, and will yet confer important blessings upon the world. We are in the habit of talking much of the vanity and the boasting of the French and the Americans, but it is well to remember that both French and Americans are in the habit of adducing a similar charge against ourselves, and alleging that Britons, and especially Englishmen, are pre-eminently proud, self-conceited, and boastful; and it would probably be an advantage to all these nations to acquire a little more of the habit of “seeing themselves as others see them.” Our own experience does not bear out the accounts we have sometimes read of the tendency of the Americans to extravagant boasting about their country. We do not remember to have heard, in the course of a visit of some months to the United States, any very unreasonable or offensive boasting or self-laudation. We heard no more of this sort of folly than an American traveller in this country would probably, in similar circumstances, hear from us in praise of ourselves; and on this ground we are inclined to believe that the ridiculous boasting about themselves and their country attributed to the Americans in the gross, is to be found only among a class, who are represented abundantly among ourselves by those who continue to assert and to maintain the old position, that one Englishman can beat three Frenchmen at any time, and other extravagances of a similar description.

Another notion pretty generally prevalent among us is, that the Americans are decidedly inferior to the inhabitants of this country in honesty and integrity, and disposed to regard violations of these virtues as venial when they are managed with skill and dexterity. We have already admitted that the general standard of morality among irreligious men, and to them only, of course, does the allegation apply, is decidedly lower than that which obtains in similar circumstances among the middle classes of our own country, and offered some explanations upon the point. It is this, more perhaps than any thing else, which keeps up in this country a strong prejudice against the United States. The complete cure of the evil is to be expected only from the more general prevalence and the more extensive influence of true religion; but still it is worthy of the consideration of religious and upright men, whether more might not be done in directing general disapprobation and the censure of public opinion, against every violation of integrity, or of anything like it, though not coming under the cognizance of the judicial tribunals. We have

no doubt that Dickens's description of the way in which violations of integrity are palliated and excused in America, upon the ground of the perpetrator being a "smart man," is, like many of his other descriptions, greatly exaggerated, and does not, by any means, apply so generally, even to irreligious men, as his statements would lead us to suppose. We are also fully aware, that on this and on some other topics usually discussed by Dickens and other travellers of a similar character, it is easy enough for Americans to retaliate upon this country, and to pick up a good deal of Change for American Notes. Still, we fear, it must be admitted, that there is truth in the general position, that violations of integrity and proceedings of a very equivocal kind on the score of honesty, do not quite so seriously injure a man's character in general society, and call down such tokens of disapprobation as they would in this country; and that therefore there is much need of aiming, as a distinct and definite object, at raising the moral tone of the community, and stamping a more decided reprobation upon all actions which fall beneath the proper standard of integrity and honour.

Somewhat akin to this accusation, though of a less serious character, is the notion very commonly entertained among us, that the Americans are most eagerly and unceasingly engaged in the pursuit of wealth; and that this, even when kept within the restraints of honesty, has produced a cold, unamiable, sordid character. There is some truth in this notion, though, like most of our popular impressions in regard to the Americans, it is exaggerated, and in so far as it is true, the result is very much owing to the circumstances in which they have been placed. From the free access which all men have to every department of business, and to every avenue to wealth and influence, and from the exclusive dependence which every man must place upon himself and upon his own capacities and resources, for success and advancement, there has been called forth, through the community in general, a very large amount of intelligence, activity, and enterprise. These causes combine to produce an extraordinary measure of competition in every department of trade and business, so that, in general, and in all ordinary circumstances, it requires unwearied activity and constant attention, something very like entire engrossment with business, to enable men to keep up and to advance, or, to use a common phrase of their own, "to get along." This, combined with the almost entire want of idle men and their hangers-on, and the fact that almost every man is labouring, and is obliged to labour, in some way or other, for maintaining his family, or keeping up the station he has already reached, almost inevitably produces a universality of engrossment with business, and a measure of attention to pecu-

niary affairs, which the very different state of matters in this country does not so extensively require. But though, from these causes, an entire engrossment with business, and a thorough devotion of time and attention to the making of money, is more general than in this country, and therefore comes out more palpably on a general survey of society, and though this, to some extent, exerts an injurious influence upon the general tone of character and sentiment, we do not think that there is more of hoarding of money, as if it were valuable for its own sake, and independently of the comforts and advantages it might procure. It is at least as common there as it is here for men to spend and enjoy the money they make; and there are probably fewer instances proportionally of men denying themselves comforts which their money might have been reasonably spent in procuring, and hoarding it up either for the mere pleasure of accumulation, or in order to enrich their children.

The general state of society, requiring and prompting to great engrossment with business, of course exerts a certain influence even upon religious men, as the withdrawal or relaxation of their attention would be likely to result, not merely in their gains being *pro tanto* diminished, but in their being driven altogether off the field. Still, with all the love of money-making usually ascribed to the Americans, and with all the circumstances in their situation that tend to the formation of this habit, we are persuaded that the duty of giving for religious and charitable objects is usually discharged by religious people in that country upon a scale at least equal in proportion to their means to that which has been commonly exhibited by religious people in our own land. Circumstances of a peculiar and extraordinary kind have recently occurred in Scotland, to call forth a greater measure of liberality and a higher standard of giving for religious objects than had been perhaps ever previously exhibited amongst us, and this would probably give us at present an advantage in any comparison which might be instituted now with the American Churches. But if we take the whole of Britain into view, extend the inquiry over the last few years, and omit what has sprung from recent and extraordinary circumstances, the contributions to religious and charitable objects in the United States, viewed of course in connexion with the number and the means of the contributors, would not suffer by the comparison. There is undoubtedly a great deal of money given by the religious people of America, to the maintenance of churches and religious ordinances, and the diffusion of Divine truth both at home and abroad. There are not wanting, on the part of laymen, instances of extraordinary Christian philanthropy, the devotion of much time and money to schemes directed to the promotion of the spiritual wel-

fare of the community. Indeed, we are inclined to think that extraordinary instances of Christian liberality are more common in America than in this country, and we ascribe this to the greater tendency which men there manifest to follow out their own personal convictions and feelings, in place of merely following the multitude in good as well as in evil. It is not uncommon in America for men to give large sums of money during their lives to religious and charitable objects, while here if they gave at all, they would bequeath it in their wills to be appropriated after their death. It is no very uncommon thing, especially in New England, at least it is not so uncommon as in this country, for religious men to act upon the principle of not laying up money for their children or relatives, but devoting their whole gains each year to objects of Christian benevolence. They can be sure, count with much greater certainty than we can upon their children being able to secure a respectable livelihood for themselves, but still the practice indicates a deep sense of the Christian obligation of giving as God has prospered them.

Before concluding, we must say something about slavery in the United States. It is a painful subject, and one which no real friend of America can contemplate without feelings of the deepest sorrow and regret. It is the topic on which, of all others, our American brethren are the most sensitive, probably from a lurking consciousness that it is the deepest and darkest stain attaching to their country, and that all they can adduce in explanation or palliation of the system, affords no adequate defence of it. It is certainly disgraceful to men, calling themselves Christians and freemen, to keep multitudes of their fellow-men in bondage, deprived wholly, or in great measure, of opportunities of intellectual and religious improvement, and of the secure enjoyment of the blessings of domestic life; and this guilt, until a few years ago, attached to the British nation, and still attaches to one-third of the free citizens of America, the white inhabitants of the Slave States. The inhabitants of the Free States contain two-thirds of the population of the whole Union. They had abolished slavery throughout their borders before it was abolished in the British colonies, and are not now directly responsible for its existence in the other States, since, by the constitution of the nation, they are precluded from exercising any control over them in this matter. On the white inhabitants of the Slave States, amounting to about one-third of the whole white population of the Union, lies the proper and direct responsibility for the continuance of slavery, and it is certainly no light one.

Those who have assumed to themselves, in the United States, the name of Abolitionists—and who, while they have done much good by exposing the evils of slavery, have also, we fear, done

much harm to a good cause by their injudicious and extravagant views and measures—have succeeded to a large extent in propagating in this country the impression, that in America all men are either abolitionists in their sense, adopting their views and concurring in their measures, or else approvers and defenders of slavery. This representation is unfair and injurious. There are in America four pretty distinctly marked grades of opinion and sentiment upon this subject.

¶ 1st, The Abolitionists, technically so called, lay it down as their fundamental principle, that slave-holding is directly and in itself a sin, in the same sense in which murder is a sin; and that every man holding slaves, no matter though they may have come into his possession without any act of his own, and no matter though the civil law of the land may interpose the most serious obstacles in the way of his manumitting them, is *ipso facto*, a thief and a robber, and ought to be regarded and treated as such. "

¶ 2d, A large class, while dissenting from this ultra-abolition principle, reckon themselves anti-slavery men, because they maintain, that the system of slavery is inconsistent with the natural rights of men, opposed to the moral bearing and general spirit of the Word of God, and injurious to the interests of religion, and on these grounds are anxious to see the system abolished; though they hold themselves precluded by the statements and conduct of the Apostles from regarding mere slave-holding as in every instance, and independently of circumstances, essentially sinful, and on the same grounds, believe that the Church of Christ is not called upon to apply the exercise of ecclesiastical discipline to mere slave-holding, or to sacrifice opportunities of preaching the Gospel and promoting the interests of religion, to agitating the general or abstract question of slavery. This view is entertained by a very numerous and influential body, comprehending, we believe, the great mass of the clergy in the Free States. We confess that we do not see how, consistently with a due regard to Scriptural authority and Apostolic example, higher ground than this can be taken on the subject of slavery; and while we are half tempted to regret that it affords room for some considerations of expediency as to the time and way and manner of setting about the abolition of slavery, which cowardly and selfish men may misapply and pervert, that is no reason why we should go beyond the line of truth and evidence, and run into the ultra-abolition principle, merely because it is more decided and unequivocal. "

3d, There are many, who, without holding any very definite principles on the general subject of slavery as a topic of abstract speculation, are desirous to see it abolished, on the ground of the great practical evils which are connected with it, and which seem inseparable from the system. This class usually concur

with that last described, in condemning the laws by which slaves are prohibited being taught to read, the separation of members of the same family is sanctioned, and manumission is rendered almost impracticable.

4th, There are the approvers and defenders of slavery, the enactors and enforcers of these infamous laws just referred to. We have no wish to defend these men from the denunciations of the Abolitionists, though we think, that the recollection of the fact, that by the constitution of the United States slavery cannot be abolished without their consent or permission, might have suggested the expediency of dealing with them in a somewhat more conciliatory way. Had the abolition of slavery in our colonies depended upon the consent of the West Indian interest, it would certainly have continued to exist at this day, and the Anti-Slavery Society would probably have seen it to be their duty to adopt a mode of procedure different in some respects from that which, being admirably adapted to our circumstances, was crowned with such triumphant success.

But while we think that the Abolitionists, who have had very much the ear of the public in this country, have done injustice to the second and third classes, by concealing their existence, or doubting their sincerity, we must say also, that these classes have done great injustice to themselves, by not giving due prominence to their views, and by not making suitable exertions for diffusing them, and attempting to get them carried into effect. The calumnies of the Abolitionists in denying their sincerity—for we have no doubt they are calumnies—have derived much plausibility from their own apathy, their want of union and energy. They cannot indeed join with the Abolitionists, because they do not agree with their fundamental principle, and strongly disapprove of some of their violent and offensive proceedings. But this is no reason why they should do nothing, and leave the subject entirely in the hands of Abolitionists. All except pro-slavery men condemn the prohibition to teach slaves to read, the separation of families, and the serious and almost insuperable difficulties interposed in the way of manumission. And yet scarcely any effort is made, except by Abolitionists, to expose or remove these great evils. All who are in any sense, or upon any grounds, opposed to slavery, and desirous to see the system brought at any time to an end, should be doing something directed towards the attainment of that object—should at least be exerting themselves to obtain for the slaves deliverance from the worst evils of their condition—to secure for them opportunities of instruction, the blessings of domestic life, and manumission when their masters are willing to grant it. Although a great proportion of the intelligence and the worth of America rank in point of profession in the second and third classes, yet

practically the first and fourth classes alone are doing much to attract public notice, and to influence the community, or are engaged in active and energetic efforts upon the subject of slavery. They allege, indeed, that the violence of the Abolitionists, and the violence thereby engendered in the Southern States, rendered it impracticable for a time to do any good, and inexpedient to attempt it. This may have been to some extent true, though we fear that too much was made of it. But this cannot excuse continued inaction; and the time surely has now come, when the abolition of the slave laws, and preparations and arrangements for the ultimate abolition of slavery, should be taken up and promoted by wiser and more judicious men than the present Abolitionists. We know there are great difficulties in the way of effecting this object—difficulties which, in this country, we do not fully appreciate and sympathize with; but if we, from ignorance of the circumstances, and want of due sympathy, underrate the difficulties of ameliorating the condition of the slaves, and effecting the ultimate abolition of slavery, is there not reason to fear, that our brethren in America overrate them? that they are too much disposed to say, There is a lion in the way—to fold their hands, and do nothing? The combined efforts of those in the Free States, who, though not Abolitionists in the technical sense, are opposed to the existing slave laws, and desirous to see slavery ultimately abolished, might surely bring some moral influence to bear upon the South, which would not only exonerate themselves from the suspicion of being the approvers and defenders of slavery, but operate beneficially upon the condition of the slaves. We are aware, that the general character of those who govern the Southern States—the worst features of which are plainly traceable to the fact that they are slave-holders—renders the result of any interference on the part of the North, even in the use of legitimate moral means—a somewhat doubtful experiment. But we cannot help thinking, that the failure of the abolition movement was owing, not merely to the extreme views put forth, and the violent measures adopted, but also to the fact, that it was not backed by the worth and intelligence of the North; and that notwithstanding the senseless pride and the foolish insolence of the mass of Southern planters, the friends of the slave in the North might adopt some judicious measures, that could scarcely fail to induce the slave-holders, at least to put an end to those features of the system, which, independently of all abstract principles about slavery, always call forth the deepest indignation, such as the formal prohibition of teaching, the virtual prohibition of manumission, and the separation of families. We wonder that the Americans, and even those in the South, who may see nothing wrong in slavery, do not allow themselves

to reflect upon the manifest impossibility of perpetuating it, and do not, under this conviction, set themselves in right earnest, and with vigour and decision, to bring to a safe and speedy termination, a system which is fraught with so much mischief to all who are in any way connected with it, and which tends so much to tarnish the fair fame of their country. It is true, that there are some men in Great Britain who speak much against American slavery, while yet they opposed the emancipation of the slaves in our own colonies—men who are still opposed to all liberal principles and institutions, and whose pretended interest in slavery is nothing more than an expression of their dislike to America. But it is also true, that all the friends of civil and religious liberty in this country, comprehending, of course, all who entertain the most friendly feelings towards the United States, and desire to see them prosperous and happy, are deeply grieved with the existence of American slavery, and are much annoyed, that the enemies of liberal institutions should have so serious an accusation to bring against them, while so little comparatively can be said in defence or in palliation of their conduct. The Americans owe it to themselves, and to the principles and the advocates of civil and religious liberty, to do more than they have been doing of late years, to wipe away this reproach. The political principles embodied in their constitution, and of which they love to regard themselves as the representatives and the champions, are not likely to command the assent, or even the respect of the civilized world, so long as the enemies of freedom can point to American slavery.

But while we think it right that our American brethren should be plainly and affectionately told, that their best and warmest friends in this country are decidedly of opinion, that they are not doing all that they can and should do for ameliorating the condition of the slaves, and bringing about their ultimate emancipation, there are some general considerations suggested by this subject, which should not be overlooked, and which are fitted to moderate the self-complacency with which, ever since 1834, we have been accustomed to contemplate this subject, and to lead us to form a somewhat fairer estimate than we commonly do of the state of matters in America.

1st, There is reason to believe, that the physical condition and the general treatment of the slaves in the United States are better than they were in our West Indian colonies previous to their emancipation. The proof of this is, that their slave population is increasing in number, in a ratio little less than the free population of the same territories, whereas in the West Indies, as Lord Brougham repeatedly proved in the House of Commons, the number of slaves regularly decreased; and the cause of



this is, that in the United States, the proprietors and their families are bred up with the slaves, and live amongst them, and are thus led to the exercise of kindly feelings, which, notwithstanding the corrupting influence of slavery upon the character of the masters as well as of the slaves, do tend greatly to diminish the general amount of cruelty and oppression, whereas, in our West Indies, there were very few cases in which the proprietors and their families were resident, and the slaves were generally under the control of hired overseers, who usually cared for nothing but gratifying their own passions, and increasing their masters' gains.

2d, The abolition of slavery in America would be a far more honourable thing to the Southern States, and to the country generally, than the emancipation of the slaves in our colonies was to Great Britain. The abolition of slavery did not run counter to the ordinary feelings and habits, prejudices and prepossessions of the inhabitants of Great Britain in general. It exposed them to no danger, and did not in the least interfere with the ordinary framework and habits of their society. It cost them just a sum of money, and that sum, though large, could scarcely be regarded, considering the immense resources of Great Britain, as requiring any great sacrifice, or imposing any great hardship. The case is very different in the Slave States of America. There slavery is interwoven with the whole framework and habits of society, with all the arrangements of social and domestic life, and with all the feelings and associations which these things tend to produce. On these grounds, combined with the very inadequate means they possess of guarding against commotions and disturbances, we have no hesitation in saying that the abolition of slavery in America would be a far greater triumph of principle, humanity, and courage, than was the emancipation of the slaves in the British colonies, and that, of course, the achievement of it would entitle them to far higher praise than we can claim to ourselves; while the fact, that it has not yet been effected, considering the great diversity of the circumstances, and the far greater difficulties that stand in the way, should not subject them to the same amount of obloquy which might justly have been heaped upon us if the coloured population of our colonies had been still the property of their former owners. The relation of the inhabitants of the Southern States to slavery is much more close and intimate than even that of the West Indian proprietors in this country was to the slavery of our colonies, and its abolition there would be much more honourable to them than it would have been to our West Indian proprietors to have emancipated their slaves without compulsion. Yet we all know that it would have been hopeless to have expected this; and

we are very doubtful whether, if slavery had stood in the same relation to us as it does to the inhabitants of the Southern States of America, there be even now enough of principle, humanity, and courage, in the community of Great Britain to have effected its abolition.

3d, There is fair ground to question whether, notwithstanding the existence of slavery, with all its attendant evils, there be a larger proportional amount of ignorance, crime, and misery, in the United States of North America, than is to be found in Great Britain and Ireland.

We have certainly no desire to palliate the evils of slavery, or to encourage the Americans in apathy and indifference to this great sin and mischief, but we think these considerations deserving of attention—fitted to moderate our self-complacency with respect to our own social state, and to lead us to think somewhat less severely of our American brethren, even in regard to that subject which is undoubtedly the darkest feature in their condition, and the most certain to interfere with their growing prosperity and their increasing influence in the world.

It is surely right in itself, and of great importance to the best interests of mankind, that friendly feelings should be cultivated and friendly relations maintained between Great Britain and the United States. Their common origin, language, literature, and religion, form bonds of connexion that do not subsist between any other nations, and which ought to be cordially recognized and acted upon. Our countrymen in general have treated the Americans unkindly and unfairly—have been too much disposed to exaggerate their faults, and to depreciate their excellences. Britain ought to be proud of having been the mother-country of such a nation—a nation which, amid some considerable disadvantages, has made astonishing progress, and has reached a very high place, in all the leading elements of national prosperity, and which is most likely to continue to exert a growing beneficial influence upon the state of the world at large. Duty and right feeling should combine in disposing us to be

To their faults a little blind,  
And to their virtues very kind.

Britain and the United States contain nearly all the true religion that is to be found in the world. They are the only countries to which we can look at present for any vigorous or extensive efforts for promoting the cause of Christ, and advancing the welfare of the human race. They are called upon “to consider each other to provoke unto love and good works.” On the Churches of these two countries depends, humanly speaking, the destiny of the world; for it is becoming every day more and more palpable,

even to the eye of sense, that considerations connected with religious subjects will henceforth exert much more influence than formerly upon the regulation of political affairs—upon the fates and the fortunes of nations. The evangelical churches of Britain and America are, indeed, the salt of the earth, and it becomes all who are interested in the progress of the Redeemer's kingdom to pray and to labour that none of this salt may lose its savour. It is the duty of the Churches of these two countries to promote friendly feeling and perpetual peace between the nations, and to maintain friendly intercourse with each other, bearing one another's burdens, profiting by each other's experience, promoting each other's welfare, and striving to please each other for their good to edification : and nothing would afford us greater pleasure than to be in any way instrumental in contributing to bring about such a result, which we have no doubt would be fraught with benefit to the Church of Christ and to the world at large.

Mr. Murray's work on the United States of America, the title of which we have prefixed to this article, we can confidently recommend to the perusal of our readers. It contains a great deal of useful and important information, the result, manifestly, of a much more careful and extensive research than is usually brought to bear upon popular works of this description. We approve highly of the judicious and conciliatory spirit in which it is written, and think it well fitted, in many respects, to produce a fairer appreciation of the United States than usually prevails amongst us, and thus to contribute to the great object of promoting kindly feeling and friendly intercourse between what are undoubtedly, in so far as the highest interests of mankind are concerned, the two most important nations in the world.

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- ART. V.—1. *Account of a New Reflecting Telescope*. By the Right Honourable LORD OXMANTOWN, M.P., (now the EARL OF ROSSE.) (*Edinburgh Journal of Science*, Vol. IX., No. XVII., p. 25. July 1828.)
2. *Account of Apparatus for Grinding and Polishing the Specula of Reflecting Telescopes*. By the Right Honourable LORD OXMANTOWN. (Do. do., Vol. IX., No. XVIII., p. 213. October 1828.)
3. *Account of a Series of Experiments on the Construction of Large Reflecting Telescopes*. By the Right Honourable LORD OXMANTOWN, M.P. (Do. do., New Series, Vol. II., p. 136. January 1830.)
4. *An Account of Experiments on the Reflecting Telescope*. By the Right Honourable LORD OXMANTOWN, F.R.S. (*Philosophical Transactions*, 1840. Part. II., p. 503-528.)
5. *Account of a Large Reflecting Telescope, lately constructed by LORD OXMANTOWN, and of the processes employed in forming its Specula*. By the Rev. T. R. ROBINSON, D.D., M.R.I.A. (*Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy*; No. 25, November 9, 1840.)
6. DR. ROBINSON'S *Address to the British Association at Cork, on the 24th August 1843, on the EARL OF ROSSE'S Reflecting Telescope*. (*Athenæum*, September 23, 1843. No. 830, p. 866.)

ALTHOUGH all the physical sciences present to the contemplative mind phenomena of surpassing beauty, and truths of deep and varied interest, yet it is in the study of astronomy that minds of ordinary power find the best exercise for their intellectual faculties, and the noblest impulse to their moral and religious aspirations. The magnitude of the heavenly bodies, and their almost infinite distance from us, and from each other, fill the mind with views at once magnificent and sublime, while our ideas of the Creator's power rise with the number and magnitude of his works, and expand with the ever-widening bounds which they occupy.

It is a difficult task, even for astronomers, to form any thing like an adequate conception of those gigantic features of magnitude and distance which are stamped upon the sidereal universe; and our conceptions but approximate their climax, when, by combining lapse of time with length of space, we ascend from conceivable to inconceivable velocities, and thus form higher and higher, though still imperfect, notions of sidereal extension.

When viewed from the highest peak of a mountainous region,

our own globe is the largest magnitude we can perceive, and the circuit of its visible horizon the greatest distance we can scan; but vast as are these units in relation to the eyeball which takes cognizance of them, they are small when compared with the globe itself, or with its circular outline. The navigator, who has measured the earth's circuit by his hourly progress, or the astronomer who has paced a degree of the meridian, can alone form a clear idea of velocity when we tell him that light moves through a space equal to the circumference of the earth, in *the eighth part of a second*—in the twinkling of an eye.\* Equipped with this unit of velocity, the mind soars on a bolder pinion to still higher conceptions. The light of the sun takes 160 minutes to move to the Georgium Sidus, the remotest planet of our own Solar Sytem; and so vast is the unoccupied space between us and the nearest fixed star, that light would require *five years* to pass through it. But as the telescope has disclosed to us objects probably many thousand times more remote than such a star, the creation of a new star at so great a distance, could not become known to us for many thousand years, nor its dissolution recognized for the same length of time. Had the fleet messenger that was charged with the intelligence of its birth, or its death, started at the creation of our own world, he would, at the present time, be only nearing our own planetary system.

But after the straining mind has thus exhausted all its resources in attempting to fathom the distance of the smallest telescopic star, or the faintest nebula, it has reached only the visible confines of the sidereal creation. The universe of stars is but an atom in the universe of space;—above it, and beneath it, and around it, there is still infinity.

These interesting and humbling views of the absolute and relative extent of the solar and sidereal systems we owe entirely to the telescope—an instrument which has a higher claim to our admiration than it has yet received, and which, by the improvements of which it is susceptible, will present to astronomy much grander discoveries than the most sanguine of its students has ventured to anticipate. There is, indeed, no instrument or machine of human invention so recondite in its theory, and so startling in its results. All others embody ideas and principles with which we are familiar, and, however complex\*their

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\* Could an observer, placed in the centre of the earth, see this moving light as it describes the earth's circumference, it would appear a luminous ring; that is, the impression of the light at the commencement of its journey would continue on the retina till the light had completed its circuit. Nay, since the impression of light continues longer than the *fourth* part of a second, *two* luminous rings would be seen, provided the light made *two* rounds of the earth, and in paths not coincident.

construction, or vast their power, or valuable their products, they are all limited in their application to terrestrial and sublunary purposes. The mighty steam-engine has its germ in the simple boiler in which the peasant prepares his food. The huge ship is but the expansion of the floating leaf freighted with its cargo of atmospheric dust; and the flying-balloon is but the infant's soap bubble, lightly laden and overgrown. But the telescope, even in its most elementary form, embodies a novel and gigantic idea, without an analogue in nature, and without a prototype in experience. It enables us to see what would for ever be invisible. It displays to us the being and nature of bodies, which we can neither see, nor touch, nor taste, nor smell. It exhibits forms and combinations of matter whose final cause reason fails to discover, and whose very existence even the wildest imagination never ventured to conceive. Like all other instruments, it is applicable to terrestrial purposes; but, unlike them all, it has its noblest application to the grandest and the remotest works of creation. The telescope was never invented.\* It was a divine gift which God gave to man, in the last era of his cycle, to place before him, and beside him, new worlds and systems of worlds—to foreshew the future sovereignties of his vast empire—the bright abodes of disembodied spirits—and the final dwellings of saints that have suffered, and of sages that have been truly wise. With such evidences of his power, and such manifestations of his glory can we disavow his ambassador, disdain his message, or disobey his commands?

When Galileo, in 1609, first applied the telescope to the heavens, the true planetary system to which we belong had not yet been established. The systems of Ptolemy, Tycho, and Copernicus, were then rivals for public approbation. The system of Copernicus, in which the earth and all the planets are supposed to move round the sun at rest in the common centre of their orbits, opposed, as it seemed to be, by Scripture, and still more opposed by the testimony of the senses, was the subject of general ridicule. Galileo even, in his early life, viewed it as a piece of "solemn folly," and it was only to a few gifted spirits that this grand secret of nature was unveiled. Galileo was converted to the doctrines of Copernicus by a lecture of Christian Wurteisen, and was destined to enjoy the proud satisfaction of establishing beyond challenge the true system of the universe, and of supporting it by that kind of evidence which appeals most powerfully to ordinary minds.

Independently of the exaggerated estimate which man could

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\* A Dutch spectacle-maker stumbled upon it when accident threw two of his lenses into an influential position.

not but form of his own globe, and of its pre-eminence over the other celestial bodies, the circumstance of the earth being alone provided with a moon to illuminate it by night, while the sun lighted it up by day, naturally gave rise to the idea that it was the only habitable world, and that the great fountain of light and heat was especially created for its use. This idea, however, sober and rational as it was, and Scriptural as it seemed to be, the strong light of truth was about to dispel. A rumour creeping through Europe, by the tardy messengers of former days, at last found its way to Venice, the city of enterprise and of knowledge, that a Dutchman possessed an instrument which had the miraculous property of making distant objects seem nearer to the observer. When on a visit at Venice, Galileo received this interesting intelligence, and received it, doubtless, with little faith. On his return to Padua, he found a letter from his correspondent in Paris, containing the same information; and having set himself to the task, he succeeded, after much study and some labour, in constructing a leaden tube a few inches long, with a spectacle glass, one convex and one concave, at each of its extremities. This tiny combination—a telescope magnifying three times, which the observer held between his fingers, or hid in the hollow of his hand—was the mustard-seed of those mighty trunks which now rise majestically to the heavens, and on which the astronomer perches himself, like the eagle upon the lofty cedar, to obtain a nearer glance of the God of Day.

Thus equipped for a survey of the heavens, Galileo pursued his task with unwearied assiduity. When viewed through instruments of greater power, the moon displayed to him her mountain ranges and her glens, her continents and her highlands, now lying in darkness, now brilliant with sunshine, and undergoing all those variations of light and shadow which the surface of our own globe presents to the alpine traveller or to the aëronaut. The four satellites of Jupiter illuminating their planet, and suffering eclipses in his shadow like our own moon; the spots on the sun's disc proving his rotation round his axis in 25 days; the crescent phases of Venus, and the triple form, or the imperfectly developed ring of Saturn, were the other discoveries in the Solar System, which rewarded the diligence of Galileo. In the starry heavens, too, thousands of new worlds were discovered by his telescope, and the Pleiades alone, which to the unassisted eye exhibits only *seven* stars, displayed to Galileo no fewer than *forty*.

The discoveries thus made with the instruments of the Professor of Padua, directed the attention of philosophers in various parts of Europe, to the improvement of the refracting telescope. One of the most distinguished of these was Christian Huygens, a celebrated Dutch philosopher, to whom both astronomy and optics owe the

deepest obligations. Having studied in early life the theory of the telescope, and of telescopic eye-pieces, he became acquainted with the causes of their imperfections, and attempted to carry into practical execution the results at which he had arrived. With his own hands he constructed refracting telescopes of considerable size and power; and with instruments *twelve* and *twenty-four* Rhinland feet in focal length, he discovered in the year 1656 the ring of Saturn, which, according to the fashion of the day, he announced to the world in an anagram, involving the following sentence, *annulo cingitur, tenui, plano, nusquam coherente, ad eclipticam inclinato*; that is, the planet is *surrounded with a ring, thin, plane, nowhere adhering, and inclined to the ecliptic*. In the year 1655, before he had made out the form and character of the ring, Huygens discovered a satellite of Saturn, which performed its revolution round the planet in nearly 16 days, at the distance of more than *eight* semidiameters of the ring. Thus successful in the application of the refracting telescope to the heavens, Huygens laboured with fresh ardour to execute still more powerful instruments; but in this attempt he met with new difficulties, which it required some ingenuity to surmount. When his object glass had a focal length of 100 feet, how was an inflexible tube to be constructed of such uncommon length? and when it was constructed, where was it to be placed, and how was it to be elevated with ease and expedition, and directed to the heavenly bodies? Huygens conceived the idea of dispensing with long tubes altogether. Having fixed his object glass in a short tube, he mounted it at the upper end of a very long pole like a mast, so that this little tube could be easily turned in every possible direction upon a ball and socket joint. This was effected by a long silk string attached to the tube, by means of which he could bring its axis into the same line with the axis of the eye tube, which he held in his hand. The ball and socket which carried the object glass tube was fixed upon a stage, which, by means of a pulley, could be raised or lowered in a groove cut out of the upright pole. By this contrivance Huygens was enabled to use telescopes more than 120 feet long, and the same method was successfully practised by the celebrated Dr. Bradley, and his uncle, Dr. Pound, with an object glass 122 feet in focal length, which, along with its eye-glass of six inches, and its other apparatus, Huygens had presented to the Royal Society of London.\*

While these important discoveries were making in Holland,

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\* Huygens informs us that he and his brother constructed excellent object glasses, whose focal lengths were 170 and 210 feet!—HUYGENS, *Cosmotheorica*, lib. 11. *Opera Varia*, tom. ii., p. 698. Both these object glasses, and also a Venetian one of 90 feet in focal length, which belonged to Flamsteed, are now in the possession of the Royal Society.



several individuals in Italy were engaged in the construction of large refracting telescopes. Joseph Campani of Bologna executed refracting telescopes 34 and 86 feet long, by means of which Dominique Cassini discovered in October 1671 the outermost, and on the 23d December 1672, the middlemost satellite of Saturn, that is, the *fifth* and the *third*. Anxious to extend the fame of his observatory, Louis XIV. ordered larger telescopes from Campani, and the Italian artist accordingly executed four object glasses of great excellence, with which Cassini discovered in March 1684, the *first* and the *second*, or the two smallest of the satellites of Saturn. The largest of these telescopes was *one hundred and forty* feet long,\* but although this instrument was required for the discovery of the two smaller satellites, yet Cassini was able afterwards to see all the five with a telescope 34 feet long. With these instruments Cassini discovered also that the broad surface of Saturn's ring was bisected by a dark elliptical line, dividing it as it were into two rings, the inner one of which appeared brighter than the outer, "with nearly the like difference of brightness as between that of silver polished and unpolished."† Cassini discovered also the rotation of the *fifth* satellite, and a belt upon Saturn, and he was the first who observed and measured the spheroidal figure of Jupiter.

Such were the discoveries made in the seventeenth century, with the ordinary refracting telescope. They were doubtless of great interest and importance; but though Hevelius called upon the nobles and princes of the land to supply the means of executing an instrument of 200 feet in length, and though he exhausted all his ingenuity in devising methods of constructing and directing rectilineal tubes of that extraordinary length, yet even if good glass could have been obtained of sufficient size, the unwieldiness of the apparatus necessary for using such telescopes, the deposition of moisture upon the object glass, and the unsteadiness of the image when highly magnified, set a limit to their length. In the present day, when it is easy to construct plane metallic reflectors, ordinary refracting telescopes, of any length—a thousand feet for example—might be brought into use by using a dry ditch for their tube, and reflecting the rays of the celestial body along its axis. In this way the most perfect steadiness would be obtained; the object glass would be accessible for the purpose of cleaning it, and the air in the tube and every part of the instrument might be preserved at an uniform temperature.

\* Ecce enim dum hæc scribo, Cassini literis certior fio, lentes quatuor, quarum maxima telescopio pedum centum quadraginta destinata sit, a Josepho Campano, easque prestantissimas Romæ esse perfectas, et ad magnum Galliæ regem missas.—*HYUGENS Astroscopia Compendiaria, Opera Varia*, tom. i., p. 270.

† This discovery was also made in England in 1665, by Mr. William Ball, with a telescope of 38 feet long.

In the year 1663, when Huygens was occupied with the improvement of refracting telescopes, our countryman James Gregory, published an account of the reflecting telescope, to which his name has since that time been attached. It consisted of a concave speculum of a parabolic form, perforated at its centre. In front of it was placed a small concave speculum of an elliptical form, the distance of the two being a little greater than the sum of their focal lengths. The image of a distant object was formed behind the larger speculum, and there magnified by an eye-piece. In 1666, Sir Isaac Newton made a change in the construction of this telescope, by "placing the eye-glass at the side of the tube, rather than at the middle;" and in this way he dispensed with the aperture in the larger speculum. Mr. Gregory failed in the construction of his instrument, probably from the want of the eye-stop, and hence Newton had the honour of being the first person who made a reflecting telescope. It was only *six inches* long, with a speculum of *an inch* in aperture. It magnified 40 times, and performed as well as a *six foot* refractor, shewing the satellites of Jupiter and the phases of Venus. In 1671, Newton completed an instrument with a speculum  $23\frac{1}{4}$  of an inch in diameter, which was exhibited to the King and to the Royal Society in 1672, and which is now in the library of that Institution, with the inscription—

*"The First Reflecting Telescope, invented by Sir Isaac Newton, and made with his own hands."*

Newton's time was too valuable to be spent in mechanical labour, and he therefore never resumed the construction of reflecting telescopes.\* The Royal Society, however, doubtless at his instigation, employed a London optician, of the name of Cox,† to execute a reflector like Newton's, *four feet* long, but he failed in polishing the mirror, and no further attempt was made to construct reflecting telescopes, till John Hadley, a country gentleman in Essex, and the inventor of Hadley's Quadrant, directed his attention to the subject. This ingenious individual completed one of these instruments in 1719, and presented it to the Royal Society, whose journals \*for January 12, 1721, contain the following notice of it. "Mr. Hadley was pleased to show the Society his reflecting telescope, made according to our President (Newton's) directions in his *Opticks*, but curiously executed by his own hand, the force of which was such as to enlarge

\* He employed a London optician to grind a glass speculum for a reflector, four feet long, but the glass was bad, and the experiment failed.

† He was probably the member of the firm of Reeves and Cox, celebrated glass grinders of that day, who failed in executing the speculum of a six feet Gregorian reflector, which James Gregory had employed him to make for him.—BREWSTER'S *Life of Newton*, p. 28.

an object near *two hundred times*, though the length thereof scarce exceeds *six feet*; and having shewn it he made a present thereof to the Society, who ordered their hearty thanks to be recorded for so valuable a gift." By means of this telescope, Hadley saw the transit of Jupiter's satellites, and their shadows on the disc of the planet; the division in Saturn's ring, and the shade of the planet cast upon it; but he was not able to distinguish more than three of the satellites. Dr. Pound and Dr. Bradley, who repeatedly observed with it, found that it represented objects "as distinct, though not altogether so clear and bright" as the telescope of Huygens.\*

The celebrated Samuel Molyneux and Dr. Bradley, were instructed in the art of grinding and polishing metallic specula, by Mr. Hadley. They wrought together at Kew, and in May 1724, they finished a telescope 26 inches in focal length,† and afterwards another of 8 feet, the largest that had yet been made. Encouraged by their success, Mr. Hawksbee made one of  $3\frac{1}{2}$  feet, which bore a magnifying power of 226 times, and shewed the *black list*, as it is called, or the division in Saturn's ring; and other opticians now began to manufacture reflecting telescopes of various sizes, for sale.

One of the most distinguished makers of reflecting telescopes, was our countryman, James Short, whose telescopes greatly surpassed those of all the English opticians. He began his career in 1732, and having found out a method of giving his specula the true parabolic figure, he executed one *fifteen inches* in focal length, which exhibited all the *five* satellites of Saturn, a feat which Cassini could perform only with a refractor *seventeen* feet long. Mr. Short executed several reflecting telescopes, with glass specula quicksilvered on the back, and Colin Maclaurin informs us that they were excellent instruments. After Short had established himself in London in 1742, he received £630 for a 12 foot reflector, which he executed for Lord Thomas Spencer, and in 1752 he finished another for the King of Spain for £1200.

Notwithstanding the rapid progress which was thus made in the improvement of the reflecting telescope, and the undoubted excellence of many of the instruments which had been executed, no discovery of the slightest importance had yet been achieved by them. The last discovery in the heavens had been made in 1686, by Cassini, with the refracting telescopes of Campani, and nearly

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\* Mr. Hadley executed another telescope of the Newtonian form, of the same focal length, and in 1726 he completed a Gregorian one.

† This instrument was elegantly fitted up by Mr. Molyneux, and presented to his Majesty John V., King of Portugal.—*SMITH'S Optics*, vol. ii., p. 363.

three quarters of a century had elapsed without any extension of our knowledge of the solar and sidereal systems. This long interval, however, was one of those breathing times which often precede grand intellectual movements. The power of the refracting telescope had been strained to the utmost, and the reflectors, vigorous and promising in their infancy, were about to attain a power and magnitude which no astronomer had ventured to anticipate. It was reserved for Sir William Herschel to accomplish this great task, and by telescopes of gigantic size to extend the boundaries of the solar system, and lay open the hitherto unexplored recesses of the sidereal world.

Having acquired a taste for astronomy, and a general knowledge of the science from the popular writings of Ferguson, this eminent individual was anxious to see with his own eyes, the wonders of the planetary system. Fortunately for science the acquisition of a telescope sufficient for such a purpose was beyond his means, and he resolved on the bold attempt to construct one with his own hands. From his knowledge of optics and mechanics he encountered fewer difficulties than might have been expected, and he at length succeeded in completing Newtonian telescopes of various sizes, from *two feet* to *twenty feet* in focal length, and Gregorian ones from *eight inches* to *ten feet* in focal length. At this time he had not discovered the direct method which he subsequently possessed of giving to specula the figure of any of the conic sections, and in order to secure a good instrument, he finished a number of specula, and selected the best of them for his telescopes. With this view he underwent the enormous labour, which none but those who have made such instruments can appreciate, of casting, grinding, and polishing *two hundred* specula of *seven feet* focus, *one hundred and fifty* of *ten feet*, and above *eighty* of *twenty feet*, besides several of the Gregorian form, and a great number on the same principle as Dr. Smith of Cambridge's reflecting microscope. The earliest of these instruments was completed in 1774, and was a five feet Newtonian reflector, with which he observed the ring of Saturn, and the satellites of Jupiter. In order to make use of specula of so great a focal length, he was driven to the invention and construction of a great variety of stands, and to these labours we owe his seven feet Newtonian telescope stand, a piece of mechanism of great ingenuity, which he perfected in 1778.

When we recollect the fine discoveries which were made by increasing the apertures and focal lengths of the refracting telescope, we cannot fail to anticipate analogous effects from the increased magnitude which Dr. Herschel thus gave to the apertures and focal lengths of his specula. When he directed these instruments to the heavens in 1776, almost every night which he de-

voted to observation presented him with some new and interesting phenomenon. His first observations, which appeared in the *Philosophical Transactions*, were made on the periodical star in the neck of the Whale, and on the Lunar Mountains; but interesting though these were, they sunk into insignificance when compared with his discovery on the 13th March 1781, of a New Planet, having its diameter four and a half times larger than our own earth, or 35,112 English miles. At first he described it as a comet, but a more careful study of its motions proved it to be a planet of our own system, which revolved round the sun in  $83\frac{1}{2}$  years, in a path far beyond the orbit of Saturn, and at the distance of 1,800,000,000 miles from the sun, which is twice as far as the planet Saturn. Europe rung with this great discovery. Astronomers of all nations anticipated with delight the future labours of the discoverer; and the name of Herschel, destined to receive new laurels in a succeeding generation, became known in every part of the civilized world. To the new planet which he had discovered he gave the name of the *Georgium Sidus*, in honour of George III., who, with the true munificence of a king, enabled Dr. Herschel to devote the rest of his life to the study of the heavens. He accordingly took up his residence at Datchet, in the neighbourhood of Windsor, and entered upon a career of discovery unparalleled in the history of science.

Our limits will not permit us to give even a general sketch of these important researches;—but viewed as the rich harvest which was reaped by the introduction of large reflecting telescopes, we must take a rapid glance of the most prominent of his discoveries. One of the most valuable properties of large reflectors was the power which they gave the observer of viewing the image formed by the large speculum, directly by the eye-glass, without using a small reflector. This method, called the *Front view*, was nearly equivalent to doubling the area of the speculum, as one half of the incident light is lost by reflection. Upon viewing the *Georgium Sidus* in this manner, Sir W. Herschel discovered on the 11th January 1787, the *second* and *fourth* of its satellites, and in 1790 and 1794, the *first*, *third*, *fifth*, and *sixth*, all of which revolved in a *retrograde* direction round their primary, in orbits very nearly in the same plane, and almost perpendicular to the plane of the ecliptic.

When we consider the many thousand stars which present themselves to the astronomer's eye while applying a telescope to the heavens, and their almost perfect similarity, differing from each other chiefly in their size and brightness, we can scarcely conceive it within the limits of human genius to do any thing more than count and name them, group them into constellations, and determine their relative places in the heavens. This, indeed,

was all that had been done before Dr. Herschel's time ; but no sooner did he discover the power of his own instruments than he undertook the Herculean task of *gauging the heavens*, and ascertaining their construction. With a twenty feet Newtonian telescope, having a speculum nearly *nineteen inches* in diameter, he found that all the nebulae and clusters of stars which had been published by Messier and Mechain, could be resolved *into an infinite number of small stars* ; and in examining the portion of the Milky Way which passes through Orion's hand and club, he looked with amazement at the "glorious multitude of stars, of all possible sizes, that presented themselves to his view," and he made the calculation that a belt  $15^{\circ}$  long and  $2^{\circ}$  broad, contained no fewer than 50,000 stars, capable of being distinctly counted. During these observations he discovered 466 new nebulae or luminous clouds, composed of stars, and he was led to a *theory of the Milky Way*, one of the boldest and most remarkable, and yet probable, conceptions which human genius has ventured to form. He considered our solar system, and all the stars which we can see with the eye, as placed within, and constituting a part of, the nebula of the Milky Way, a congeries of many millions of stars, so that the projection of these stars must form a luminous track on the concavity of the sky ; and by estimating or counting the number of stars in different directions, he was able to form a rude judgment of the probable form of the nebula, and of the probable position of the solar system within it.

These views were still farther extended in a subsequent memoir, entitled *Remarks on the Construction of the Heavens*. He regarded the starry firmament as composed of twelve different classes of bodies. Insulated stars ;—binary sidereal systems or double stars ;—more complex systems, or treble, quadruple, quintuple, or multiple stars ;—clustering stars, and the milky way ;—clusters of stars ;—nebulae ;—stars with burrs or stellar nebulae ;—milky nebulosity ;—nebulous stars ;—planetary nebulae ;—and planetary nebulae with centres. In reasoning upon these combinations of sidereal matter, Dr. Herschel supposes that double and multiple stars have a motion of rotation round their common centre of gravity ; that the various nebulosities above mentioned are condensed by attraction, and converted into stars ; that stars previously formed attract nebulous matter, and increase in size, and that neighbouring stars slowly advance towards each other, and constitute globular clusters.

Theoretical as these views doubtless are, they are in entire harmony with the laws of the material world, and some of them have been actually demonstrated by the subsequent discoveries of Sir W. Herschel and other astronomers. In more than fifty of the

double stars, he found that in the space of a quarter of a century a change had taken place either in the distance of the stars, or in their *angle of position*, that is, in the angle which a line joining the stars forms with the direction of their daily motion, and that in some stars both their distance and their angle of position had changed. From a comparison of his earliest with his latest observations, he concluded that the smaller of the two stars revolved round the greater, in periods given in the following table :

	Period of Revolution.
Castor, . . .	342 years.
$\delta$ Serpentis, . .	375
$\gamma$ Virginis, . .	708
$\nu$ Leonis, . . .	1200
$\epsilon$ Bootes, . . .	1681

In the double star  $\zeta$  Hercules, *the two stars had approached so near that five-eighths of the apparent diameter of the small star were actually eclipsed by the larger one*, so that the two together resembled a single lengthened or wedge-formed star. In the double star,  $\xi$  *Ursæ Majoris*, Sir William discovered an unusually rapid change of place, and it appears from the more recent observations of Struve, Sir John Herschel, and Sir James South, that its motion is very unequal, varying from about  $5^\circ$  to probably  $20^\circ$  or  $30^\circ$  per annum, so that the rotation of the one star round the other must be accomplished in *about forty years!*

The last great discovery made by Sir William Herschel is the direction and magnitude of the proper motion of the fixed stars. This motion was discovered by Halley, and explained by Tobias Mayer, who ascribed it to a motion of the whole solar system. Sir W. Herschel ascertained that our solar system is advancing towards the constellation Hercules, or, more accurately, to a point in space whose right ascension is  $245^\circ 52' 30''$ , and north polar distance  $40^\circ 22'$ , and that the quantity of this motion is such, that to an astronomer placed in Sirius, our sun would appear to describe an arch of a little more than a *second* every year.

Ambitious of gaining a still farther insight into the bosom of space, Sir W. Herschel resolved to attempt the construction of larger telescopes. He began a 30 feet aerial reflector in 1781, but the speculum, which was *three feet* in diameter, having cracked in the act of annealing, and another of the same size having been lost in the fire from a failure in the furnace, his scheme was unexpectedly retarded. In ardent minds, however, disappointment is often a stimulus to higher achievements, and the double accident which we have mentioned suggested, no doubt, the idea of making a larger instrument. He accordingly

intimated the plan of such a telescope to the King, through Sir Joseph Banks, that liberal and unwearied patron of science, and his Majesty, with that munificent spirit which he had previously displayed, instantly offered to defray the whole expense of it. Encouraged by this noble act of liberality, which has never been imitated by any other British sovereign, Sir W. Herschel, towards the close of the year 1785, began the Herculean task of constructing a reflecting telescope *forty feet in length*, and having a speculum fully *four feet in diameter*. The metallic surface of the great speculum is  $49\frac{1}{2}$  inches in diameter, but upon the rim there is an offset one inch deep and three-fourths of an inch broad, which reduces the polished or effective surface to 48 inches. The thickness of the speculum, which is uniform in every part, is  $3\frac{1}{2}$  inches, and its weight nearly 2118 pounds. The metal "was composed of pure copper and pure tin, in the proportion of 430 lb. of copper to 2441 lb. of a higher speculum metal, whose proportions were 1496 copper and 812 tin,"—a quantity which Sir John Herschel considers too low to resist tarnish. The composition used by Mudge was 32 copper and  $14\frac{1}{2}$  grain tin. Sir W. Herschel's, when reduced to this standard, was 32 copper, and 10.7 of tin. In his first attempt to cast the speculum, Sir William used an inferior metal, which it is not easy to identify from his description of it. It was, however, a failure, and so was his second attempt, with probably a higher alloy. In casting the third, which we have just described, he met with entire success. We had the pleasure of seeing this speculum forty years ago, which was freely shown to us by its distinguished maker; and having been familiar with the aspect of the compositions of Mudge and Edwards, we distinctly recollect that the four feet speculum had the look of a good ordinary speculum, made of the usual proportion of copper and tin, but of course did not possess that peculiar colour which this composition received from the addition of arsenic and silver. The speculum, when not in use, was preserved from damp by a tin cover, which fitted upon a rim of close grained cloth, cemented on the circumference of the speculum. The tube of the telescope was 39 feet 4 inches long, and its width 4 feet 10 inches. It was made of iron, and was 3000 lbs. lighter than if it had been made of wood. The observer was seated in a suspended moveable seat at the mouth of the tube, and viewed the image of the object with a magnifying lens or eye-piece. The focus of the speculum, or the place of the image, was within 4 inches of the lower side of the mouth of the tube, and came forward into the air, so that there was space for the part of the head above the eye, to prevent it from intercepting many of the rays that go from the object to the mirror. The eye-piece moved in a tube carried by a slider directed to the



centre of the speculum, and fixed on an adjustable foundation at the mouth of the tube.\*

This magnificent structure, which used to be an object of wonder to all travellers who passed Slough, was completed on the 27th August 1789; and the *very first moment* it was directed to the heavens, a new body was added to the solar system. This discovery was recorded in the following memorable words:—“In hopes of great success with my 40 feet speculum, I deferred the attack upon Saturn till that should be finished; and having taken an early opportunity of directing it upon Saturn, the very first moment that I saw the planet I was presented with a view of *six* of its satellites, in such a situation, and so bright, as rendered it impossible to mistake or not to see them.” In less than a month, Sir William discovered, with the same instrument, the *seventh* satellite of Saturn,—“an object,” says Sir John Herschel, “of a far higher order of difficulty.” Though discovered, however, by this noble instrument, both these satellites, which are nearer the planet than the *five* old ones, and revolve round their primary in  $23\frac{1}{2}$  and  $32\frac{3}{4}$  hours, were afterwards distinctly recognized by Sir William Herschel with the *twenty* feet reflector. Both the *sixth* and *seventh* have been seen by Sir James South with his great Achromatic of *thirteen* inches aperture, and M. Lamont of Munich has seen the *sixth*, with an Achromatic of *eleven* inches aperture.

As a maker of large reflecting telescopes, Sir W. Herschel was followed by Mr. John Ramage, a merchant in Aberdeen, who, so early as 1806, had succeeded in making reflectors with specula six inches in diameter. In 1810 he constructed an instrument whose focal length was 8 feet, and the diameter of its mirror 9 inches. In 1817 he executed a still larger one of 20 feet focal length, and with a speculum  $13\frac{1}{2}$  inches in diameter, now in the possession of Thomas Gordon, Esquire, of Buthlaw, in Aberdeenshire. Since that time, he completed *three* telescopes, each 25 feet in focal length, and with mirrors 15 inches

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\* In a correspondence which the author of this article had with Sir William Herschel between 1802 and 1806—a correspondence marked with that kindness and condescension which a great mind never fails to show to his inferiors in age and knowledge—he mentioned his having composed a work on the subject of casting, grinding, and polishing “mirrors for telescopes of all sizes, in which the method of giving them not only the parabolic form, but any other of the conic sections that may be required, is explained with perfect clearness, and supported by several thousands of facts.” Sir William mentioned also, that Sir Joseph Banks, the President of the Royal Society, was acquainted with his intention of giving this work to the public, and that he was, in a few days, (Jan. 1805,) going to London to consult him on the subject. We regret much that other, and doubtless more important pursuits, have interfered with the publication of a work which could not fail to have possessed the highest interest, and to have contributed to the perfection of the reflecting telescope, and to the advancement of astronomy.

in diameter. One of them was sold to Captain Ross, R.N., the celebrated Arctic navigator, and another has been erected at the Royal Observatory, Greenwich.\* This instrument, which was for some time in our possession, was an excellent telescope, and showed the double stars with great distinctness. Mr. Ramage's greatest effort was made in 1823, when he cast and polished a speculum 21 inches in diameter, and 54 feet in focal length. It was not erected on a stand at the end of 1825, and we believe it has been purchased by Professor Nichol, for the Observatory of Glasgow.

Notwithstanding Mr. Ramage's success in producing good instruments, yet no discovery whatever was made by any of them, and we must therefore consider the reflecting telescope as having reached its climax in the hands of Sir W. Herschel. It seemed in vain to aim at greater results without royal or national support, and still more vain would have been the expectation that an individual should be found who combined the wealth, the enterprise, and the genius which were required to rival or to exceed the labours of Sir William Herschel. The current of invention, therefore, thus checked in its accustomed course, took a new but a valuable direction, and the improvement of the *Achromatic Telescope* now became an object of general pursuit.

Most of our readers are doubtless aware, that all convex lenses of glass with spherical surfaces, form images of objects in their focus behind the lens. The central parts of the lens, however, form the image nearer the lens than the parts at its circumference, and hence there is a confusion in the picture which is called *spherical aberration*. When the image is formed by *white light*, consisting of *red, yellow, and blue rays*, there is another imperfection in the image called *chromatic aberration*. The image formed by the *blue rays* is formed nearer the lens than that formed by the *red rays*, while that formed by the *yellow rays* is placed between the other two images. Owing to these two causes, of which the last is the most influential and injurious, the image of any object formed by a spherical lens consists of a mass of images of different colours, and not coincident with each other. Sir Isaac Newton had rashly pronounced these imperfections to be incurable; but in this, as in other cases, the authority even of Newton's name was unable to check the enterprise or paralyse the energy of genius. A humble yet ardent neophyte in the temple of science had the boldness to hope when the high-priest himself had despaired, and the goddess was propitiated by the courage of her worshipper. Mr. Chester More Hall, a country gentlemen in Essex, a name unknown to fame,

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† This instrument is described, and a drawing of it, as erected upon its stand, given in the *Transactions of the Astronomical Society*, vol. ii., p. 413.

had, in imitation of the organ of sight, combined media of different refractive powers, and had, so early as 1733, constructed object glasses of flint and crown glass, which corrected the *chromatic* and diminished the *spherical aberration* of the object glass. The telescopes which he thus made, and which afterwards received the name of *Achromatic* from Dr. Bliss, were neither exhibited nor sold, and no account of their construction was given to the world. Pursuing the same object, John Dollond arrived, in 1758, at the same result. He re-invented the achromatic telescope, manufactured the instrument for sale, and for more than half a century, supplied all Europe with this invaluable instrument. The difficulty of procuring flint glass free of flaws and imperfections, prevented him from constructing telescopes which could at all rival reflectors such as those of Herschel, but they were peculiarly adapted for transit instruments and mural circles, and by giving an accuracy to astronomical observation previously unknown, they have perhaps contributed as powerfully to the progress of astronomy as those mighty instruments which were applicable chiefly to the discovery and observation of phenomena.

The monopoly of these valuable telescopes soon passed into foreign states. The manufacture of flint glass had been so severely taxed by the British Government, that the philosopher who made a pound of it exposed himself to the highest penalties; and as if the rapacious Exchequer had resolved to put down the achromatic telescope by statute, they enacted that *a single pound of glass melted fifty times should pay the duty upon fifty pounds!* After the mischief had been done, the Government were made to understand their ignorance of British interests, and a committee of the Royal Society was permitted to erect an experimental glass house, and to enjoy the high privilege of compounding a pot of glass without the presence and supervision of an exciseman. The act of grace, as in many other cases had been too long delayed: We ourselves predicted sixteen years ago, that the committee neither would nor could accomplish the object for which they were associated, and we can now record the melancholy truth, that the experimental glass house has been long closed, and that the experimenters have disappeared.

But though we have thus lost the monopoly of the achromatic telescope, and are now obliged to import the instrument from rival states, there is nevertheless a law of progression in practical science, with which neither ignorant governments, nor slumbering institutions, nor individual torpor can interfere. What a conclave of English legislators and philosophers attempted in vain, was accomplished by a humble peasant in the gorges of the Jura, where no patron encouraged, and no exciseman disturbed

him. M. Guinand, a maker of clock cases in the village of Brenetz, in the canton of Neufchatel, had been obliged by defective vision to grind spectacle glasses for his own use. Thus practically versed in the optics of lenses, he amused himself with making small refracting telescopes, which he mounted in paste-board tubes. He might have advanced a step farther in these interesting occupations, but he would soon have found himself in the same course in which Huygens and Campani had reached the goal. An achromatic telescope of English manufacture had come into the possession of his master, Jacquet Droz. He was permitted to examine it—to separate its lenses—and to measure its curves;—and after studying its properties, he was seized with the desire of imitating the wondrous combination. Flint Glass was to be had only in England, and he and his friend M. Reordon, who went to England to take out a patent for his self-winding watches, purchased as much of it for him as enabled him to make several achromatic telescopes. The glass, however, was bad; and the bold peasant, seeing no way of getting it of a better quality, resolved upon making good flint glass for his own use. “We are confident, as we have elsewhere had occasion to remark, that no chemist in England or in France would have ventured on such a task;—but *ignorance was in this case power*, and glass, fortunately for science, was not an exciseable commodity in the village of Brenetz. Studying the chemistry of fusion, he made daily experiments in his blast furnace, between 1784 and 1790, with meltings of three or four pounds each, and carefully noted down the circumstances, and the results of each experiment. Marked success invigorated his ever-failing efforts, and the intelligence that learned academicians had offered prizes for the object at which he strained, animated him with fresh and glowing excitements. Having abandoned his profession for the more lucrative one of making bells for repeaters, his means became more ample, and his leisure hours more numerous. He purchased a piece of ground on the banks of the Doubs, where he constructed a furnace capable of fusing *two hundred weight* of glass. The failure of his crucibles, the bursting of his furnaces, and a thousand untoward accidents, which would have disconcerted less ardent minds, served only to invigorate his. The disappointments of one day were the pedestal on which the resolutions of the preceding one reached a higher level; and in the renewed energy of his spirit, and the increasing brightness of his hopes, the unlettered peasant seems to have been assured that fate had destined him to triumph. The threads, and specks, and globules which destroyed the homogeneity of his glass, were the subjects of his constant study; and he at last succeeded in obtaining considerable pieces of uniform transparency and refractive power,

sometimes *twelve*, and in one case *eighteen inches* in diameter! He at last acquired the art of soldering two or more pieces of good glass, and though the line of junction was often marked with globules of air or particles of sand, yet by grinding out these imperfections on an emiered wheel, and by replacing the mass in a furnace, so that the vitreous matter might expand and fill up the excavations, he succeeded in effacing every trace of junction, and was consequently able to produce with certainty the finest discs of flint glass."

After the Achromatic telescope had been banished from England as it were by Act of Parliament, it found a hospitable reception in the optical establishment of Fraunhofer, at Benedict Baiern, near Munich. This illustrious individual, who united the highest scientific attainments with great mechanical and practical knowledge, having heard of Guinand's success in the manufacture of flint glass, repaired to Brenetz in 1804, and induced the village optician to settle at Munich, where, from 1805 to 1814, he practised his art, and taught it to his employers. Fraunhofer was an apt and a willing scholar, and possessing a thorough knowledge of chemistry and physics, he speedily learned the processes of his teacher, and discovered the theory of manipulation, of which Guinand knew only the results. Experience added daily to his knowledge. He detected imperfections even in the crown glass which had hitherto been considered faultless, and reconstructing his furnaces, and directing his whole mind to the work, he succeeded in bringing the manufacture of flint and crown glass to the highest perfection. Thus supplied with the finest materials of his art, he studied their refractive and dispersive powers, and by his grand discovery of the fixed lines in the spectrum, he arrived at methods of constructing achromatic telescopes which no other artist had possessed. In these laborious researches he was patronized by Maximilian Joseph, king of Bavaria, and had not an insidious disease, aggravated in its amount, and accelerated in its course, by corporeal and mental labour, carried him off in the prime of life, he would long before this have astonished Europe with the production of Achromatic object glasses of *eighteen inches* in diameter.

The practical results of these discoveries and improvements we shall now briefly detail. In 1820, several years after Guinand had returned to his native village, he was honoured with a visit from M. Lerebours, a celebrated Parisian optician, who had heard of the success of his processes. Lerebours purchased all his glass, and left orders for more, and M. Cauchoix, another skilful Parisian artist, procured from him large discs of glass. With the glass obtained from Guinand, M. Cauchoix executed two object glasses, one nearly *twelve inches* in diameter, with a focal length

of *twenty* feet, and the other *thirteen* and a third inches in diameter, with a focal length of *twenty-five* feet *three* inches. The first of these object glasses was mounted at the Royal Observatory in Paris; but though the French government had prepared a stand for it at the expense of the £500, they grudged the sum that was necessary to acquire the object glass. Sir James South, who happened to be in Paris, and whose liberality and scientific acquirements are well known to our readers, saw the value of this object glass, and purchased it for his observatory at Kensington. The other object glass, thirteen and a third inches in diameter, was purchased by a young Irish gentleman, then in Paris, Mr. Edward Cooper, M.P., and the telescope to which it belongs has been erected at Marckrea Castle, in the county of Sligo, with an equatorial mounting by Mr. Grubb of Dublin. This splendid instrument has been recently removed to Nice, where, we regret to say, Mr. Cooper has been obliged to reside for the benefit of his health.

The telescopes executed by Fraunhofer, and by his successors at Munich, have been especially distinguished not only by their excellence as optical instruments for the purposes of general observation, but for the ingenuity and value of the micrometers and other appendages, which are indispensable in astronomical investigations. Before his death, Fraunhofer executed two fine instruments, one with an achromatic object glass nearly 10 inches ( $9\frac{1}{2}\%$ ) in diameter, and another 12 inches in diameter. The first of these was ordered by the Emperor of Russia, for the observatory at Dorpat in Livonia, and is the instrument with which M. Struve has made his fine observations on double stars. Its focal length is  $13\frac{1}{2}$  feet. It has four eye-glasses, with magnifying powers, varying from 175 to 700, and its price was £1300, though it was liberally sold at prime cost for £950. The other telescope, 18 feet in focal length, was made for the king of Bavaria, at the price of £2720. Messrs. Merz and Mahler, of Munich, have more recently executed, for the Russian Observatory of Pulkova, an Achromatic Telescope, whose object-glass has 15 inches of effective aperture, and a focal length of 22 feet. Fraunhofer was willing to undertake an achromatic telescope, with an object glass 18 inches in diameter, and which, according to his own estimate, would have cost about £9200; but no wealthy amateur of science, and no sovereign, desirous of immortalizing his own name, and extending this branch of knowledge, has been induced to give an order for such an instrument. If the Achromatic Telescope, therefore, has reached its climax, it is because the power of art has outstripped the liberality of wealth, and because the intellectual desires of our species have ceased to be commensurate with their intellectual capacity.

If astronomy, then, is to be advanced by means of this class of instruments, some new mode must be devised of constructing them in a cheaper and more effective form. Regarding it therefore as impracticable to construct an achromatic object glass more than 15 inches in diameter, for such a sum as we can reasonably expect to command, may we not effect this object by composing the lens of different portions of glass made out of the same pot, and therefore having the same refractive and dispersive powers. This idea, which we suggested many years ago, may be effected in two ways, either by grinding or polishing the different portions of the lens separately, and fixing them in their proper place by mechanical means, or by uniting them together with a cement of the same expansibility by heat as the glass itself. Or we may unite into one telescope two or more object glasses, either of the same or of different focal lengths;—the superposition of the images being effected by reflectors, and in the case of object glasses of unequal focal lengths, the equality in the images being produced by a second and smaller object glass, convex or concave as the case requires.\*

But whether the Achromatic Telescope be destined or not to attain greater magnitude and perfection, it has, in its present state, done vast service to astronomical science. To two achromatic telescopes, mounted equatorially, the one *five* feet long, with an object glass  $3\frac{1}{4}$  inches in diameter, executed by Dollond, and the other *seven* feet long, with an object-glass *five* inches in diameter, and executed by Tulley, we owe the splendid series of observations made in 1821, 22, 23, by Sir John Herschel and Sir James South, on the apparent distances and positions of 380 double and triple stars; and it was by the same instruments that Sir James South, in 1823, 24, 25, determined the distances and positions of no fewer than 458 double and triple stars, a task of herculean magnitude, which, had he done nothing else for science, would have immortalized him. His observations were made in a foreign country, at Passy, near Paris, and include about 160 double and triple stars previously undiscovered.†

While the astronomy of Binary and Ternary systems were thus rapidly advancing in England, the liberality of the Emperor of Russia was providing for his observatory of Dorpat the magni-

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\* Since this article was written, we have learned that M. Bontemps of Paris has acquired M. Guinand's art of making large discs of flint glass, and that he has actually offered to produce perfect discs *three feet* in diameter! Messrs. Chance and Co. of Birmingham have taken out a patent for M. Bontemps' process, and are prepared to manufacture discs of all sizes, either of crown or flint glass, up to *three feet*.

† Sir John Herschel had, previous to 1829, published, in the *Memoirs of the Astronomical Society*, three series of observations on double and multiple stars, completing the first thousand of these objects detected with the twenty-feet reflecting telescope.

ficient achromatic telescope of Fraunhofer, which we have already mentioned. This fine instrument was, in 1824, placed in the hands of M. Struve, who has pre-eminently distinguished himself in this branch of astronomical inquiry; and, in 1837, the Academy of Sciences at Petersburg published\* his micrometrical measures of all the double and multiple stars which he had observed during *thirteen* years, from 1823 to 1837, with the great telescope of Fraunhofer. In order to give to these results their full value, Struve undertook the determination of the absolute mean places of these stars, that is, of the principal star of each group, by fixed meridional instruments and repeated observations. This great work was begun in 1822, when the great meridian circle of Reichenbach arrived at Dorpat, and was continued till 1838, when Struve changed his residence from Dorpat to Pulkova; and the catalogue, containing upwards of 3000 double stars, is now about to be published by the Imperial Academy of Sciences at St. Petersburg.†

As we have no knowledge of the relative distances of the fixed stars, our readers will doubtless wish to know on what grounds astronomers assume that two stars which may be only accidentally in the same line, or near each other, form a binary system, *physically* and not merely *optically*, connected. Double stars are found in every part of the heavens; but, in general, they are less numerous in those places where there are fewer stars, diminishing about the Great Bear, the Dragon, and under the *Canes Venaticiæ*, and increasing proportionally as we approach the Milky Way. They are very numerous about Lyra, in the Goose, the Fox, and the Arrow, in Perseus, and in Aries. In Struve's Catalogue of 3063 double stars, the double stars in the different classes, or with different degrees of closeness, are as follows:—

1st Class, or 4" distant,	2d Class, 8" distant,	3d Class, 16" distant,	4th Class, 32" distant,	Total in all the classes.
987	675	659	736	3063

Now, if these stars were only *optically* double, those of the 4th class ought to be the most numerous. For, as the surfaces of spheres, as Struve justly reasons, whose radii are 4, 8, 16, 32 seconds, (the distances of the stars in the different classes) are as

\* *Stellarum duplicium et multiplicium mensuræ micrometricæ*, auctore F. G. W. STRUVE. 1837. Fol.

† Under the title of "*Stellarum inerrantium, imprimis compositarum, quæ in Catalogis Dorpatensibus annorum 1820 et 1827 continentur, positiones mediæ ex 22 annorum et 1822 ad 1843 observationibus, in specula Dorpatensi institutis deductæ.*" *Astronomische Nachrichten*, Altona, 1844, Juli 6. The number of stars which passed in review through Struve's telescope was estimated at 120,000, though his survey extended only to  $105^{\circ}$  from the pole, or to stars whose meridian altitude exceeded  $160\frac{1}{4}^{\circ}$ .



the squares of 1, 2, 4, 8, or as 1, 4, 16, 64, the doctrine of probabilities teaches us that the number of optically double stars of various classes will be as the differences, 1, 3, 12, 48, between the last numbers, and therefore it follows, that *out of SIXTY-FOUR stars optically double, there should be only ONE of the 1st class*, whereas there are 987! Again, assuming that the 736 double stars of the *fourth class* are *optically double*, it will follow, from the preceding ratios, that the different classes should contain the following numbers of optically double stars, viz.

1st Class,	2d Class,	3d Class,	In all these three Classes,
16	47	184	247

Whereas they contain of double stars,

1st Class,	2d Class,	3d Class,	In all these three Classes,
987	675	654	2316

Hence we may conclude with our author, that almost all the stars of the first class are *physically double*, and likewise those of the second class, and a very great part of the third class. M. Struve goes farther, and maintains that the stars even of the fourth class ought to be considered as physically double, and he establishes or rather confirms this opinion in the following manner:—

“ In the celestial maps of Harding, which may be considered as perfect, as far as regards stars of the *seventh* magnitude, we reckon 10,229 stars of the first to the seventh magnitude, even to the distance of 15° south of the equator. If we apply to this number the doctrine of probabilities, we shall obtain the very remarkable result that we ought to find in this space but one pair of stars 32 seconds distant from each other. If, then, it is possible that some one of the double bright stars of the third and fourth classes are in a manner optically double, all the double stars of the first class, and a great part of those of the fourth, ought to be considered physically double, or as forming a particular system of two stars joined together.”—*Struve's Report on Double Stars, addressed to Prince Lieven.*

Notwithstanding the number and accuracy of the observations which have been made on these double stars, which really form binary systems, it is very difficult to deduce from them any general results in which the mind can rest with satisfaction. Sir John Herschel, and Savary, and Encke, have attempted to determine the laws which regulate the revolution of the lesser star, and to obtain some information respecting the distance of these bodies from the earth. By employing only the position of the line joining the two stars, Sir John Herschel has arrived at the conclusion, that the smaller star describes an ellipse round the greater star, supposed to be at rest in one of the foci of that ellipse, and therefore that the law of gravity, varying inversely as the square of

the distance, is extended to the sidereal systems. M. Savary has gone still farther, and has pointed out a singularly ingenious method of obtaining an approximate determination of the distances of some of the double stars from our earth or sun. This method, which we cannot pretend to explain without diagrams, consists in determining the difference between the duration of the two halves of the revolution of the lesser star, in an orbit much inclined to the visual ray drawn from the earth to the star, arising from the velocity of light. The semi-revolution performed by the star in describing the half of its orbit, in which it advances towards us, must, owing to the velocity of light, appear to be performed in less time than it is in reality, while the duration of its semi-revolution in the other half, while moving from us, must appear to be augmented. In applying this method, we must, of course, assume, that the orbit of the star is symmetrical in relation to its major axis, and that there are two points in the orbit equidistant from the greater star, at which the lesser star moves with the same velocity. When the inclination of the orbit, therefore, and its angular extent, have been otherwise previously determined, the difference of time between the two semi-revolutions, will afford a basis for approximating to the linear dimensions of the orbit, and the star's true distance from the earth.

Such, we were about to say, is all the knowledge of the binary sidereal systems which we have to communicate; but a notice has just appeared\* of an important discovery by that distinguished astronomer, Professor Bessel of Königsberg, which promises to us the development of new mysteries, the exhibition of sidereal bodies, which, though invisible to the eye of man, stand revealed to his reason—just as the concealed loadstone is detected by its attractions when the magician happens to have a philosopher among his audience. Hitherto it had appeared that the proper motions of the fixed stars were uniform, arising, as was supposed, from the advancement of the solar system to the constellation Hercules; but more accurate observations were still required to give plausibility to this bold hypothesis. The fine observations now made in our observatories with fixed meridional instruments, have enabled Professor Bessel to investigate the nature of these motions with an accuracy previously unattainable; and, with this view, he has discussed, by a laborious process, his own observations and those of different astronomers since 1753, the epoch of Bradley's observations. In this inquiry, he has found that the proper motion of *Sirius* in right ascension, and that of

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\**Athenæum*, August 31st, 1844.

*Procyon* in declination, deviate very sensibly from uniformity. Hence it follows, that these stars must describe orbits in space under the influence of central forces; and, following out these principles, he has arrived at the conclusion, that the apparent motions of these two stars are such as might be produced by their revolution about *non-luminous* central bodies not very remote from the star itself. Hence they will prove *binary* systems, like those of double stars, and differing from them only in this, that they have dark in place of bright partners, to which they perform the functions of revolving suns. *Sirius* and *Procyon* are, therefore, double stars; and we may indulge the hope that this remarkable fact, deduced only from their motions, may yet be rendered visible by their being more or less eclipsed by the dark planet which controls them. In this case the visible partners will exhibit the phenomena of variable stars, and the law of their variation may enable us to form some conclusion respecting the form and position of their orbits. The phenomena of variable stars have been hitherto ascribed to the rotation of the star about its axis, which may bring into view portions of its disc more or less luminous; but may we not now suppose that stars are rendered variable by the interposition of their non-luminous partners? In like manner we may ascribe the appearance of new stars to their emerging from behind their dark partners, and the disappearance of others to their undergoing a lengthened eclipse from the same non-luminous bodies. There is an obvious difficulty, however, to which the existence of non-luminous bodies is exposed. The revolution of *Sirius* or *Procyon*, as suns, round their dark companions, must have the effect of illuminating them, and though their light may not be sufficiently great to become visible with our present telescopes, yet we may hope that the huge instruments which will yet be directed to the heavens may render them visible, and thus add to our knowledge of these remarkable sidereal systems.

After these preliminary details respecting the construction of gigantic telescopes, and the principal discoveries which they have enabled astronomers to make, our readers will be the better able to appreciate the genius, the talent, the patience, and the liberality with which an Irish nobleman has constructed telescopes far transcending in magnitude and power all previous instruments, whether they were the result of private wealth, or of royal or national munificence. That nobleman is Lord Oxmantown, now the Earl of Rosse, one of a distinguished group of Irish philosophers, who, educated in the same academical institution, now adorn it with their genius, and sustain it by their labours. In the records of modern science there are few brighter names than those of Robinson, Hamilton, Lloyd, and Maccullagh, and in the persons

of the Earl of Rosse and Lord Enniskillen, the aristocracy of Ireland have contributed their contingent to her intellectual chivalry. But to us in a sister land, the land of sober judgment and of serious faith, genius, however bright, is shorn of its purest rays, when it seeks and finds but the bubble reputation among the wonders which it unfolds; and when in search of the richest gems, it has missed the pearl of the greatest price. It is, therefore, a matter of no ordinary satisfaction, that the intellectual energy of Ireland is concentrated in men of like faith with ourselves, who will be found girt for the same contest when the wisdom of this world shall be arrayed against the faith once delivered to the saints. If, in an eloquent address to the British Association at Cork, Dr. Robinson has given expression to his delight "that so high a problem as the construction of a *six feet* speculum should have been mastered by one of his countrymen—by one whose attainments are an honour to his rank—an example to his equals—and an instance of the perfect compatibility of the highest intellectual pursuits with the most perfect discharge of the duties of domestic and social life;"—we also may indulge in the pleasing recollection that Lord Oxmantown's earliest plans for improving the reflecting telescope were first given to the world in three communications which were published in a *Scottish Journal of Science*, and that some of us were the first to recognize their value, and to see looming in the distance that mighty instrument with which we are about to make our readers acquainted.

As the surfaces of all lenses and specula are necessarily of a spherical form, they are subject to what is called *spherical aberration*, that is, the edge both of specula and lenses has a shorter focus than the centre. In lenses this may be diminished or even removed by the opposite aberration of a concave lens; but this remedy cannot be applied to specula. It therefore occurred to Lord Rosse, that the first step towards the improvement of the reflecting telescope, was to *diminish the spherical aberration*. With this view he formed the speculum of *three parts*, a central speculum, a ring, inclosing the central speculum, and an outer ring. These three portions were cemented together, and ground and polished as one speculum. They were then combined by an ingenious piece of mechanism, so that the first and second rings could be *advanced* each a small fraction of an inch, in order that their foci should accurately coincide with the focus of the central speculum. Lord Rosse's first attempt did not succeed to his wishes, owing to a defect in the mechanism, which required frequent adjustments, as the smallest shock displaced the images. He then tried to combine one ring only, 1 inch thick, with a central metal  $1\frac{1}{2}$  inches thick, the two together forming a speculum of

*six* inches aperture, and two feet focal length. This combination was more successful, as it "remained in perfect adjustment even after very violent shocks." In these combinations Lord Rosse did not perceive the ill effects which he had apprehended from contraction and expansion; and it remained to be seen, from future trials, if they did appear, whether or not they could be removed. "On my return from Parliament, (June 1828,)" says Lord Rosse, "if other avocations do not interfere, I propose to construct a speculum in three parts, of 18 inches aperture, and *twelve feet* focal length;—this will be giving the experiment a fair trial on a large scale." This proposal was accordingly executed, and he found the speculum superior to a solid one of the same dimensions.

In order to grind and polish large specula, Lord Rosse soon perceived that a *steam-engine* and appropriate machinery were necessary. He accordingly invented a machine of this kind, and transmitted an account of it to the writer of this article, who published it in the *Edinburgh Journal of Science* for October 1828. The engine which his Lordship actually constructed and used was one of two-horse power, though from some rude trials with it he inferred that a one-horse power would be fully sufficient for executing at the same time *three* or *four* specula six inches in diameter. For such sizes Lord Rosse conceived that a day would suffice for completing the process, and that a machine on the scale shown in his drawing, "would be sufficiently large to grind and polish a speculum of *three feet diameter*, or perhaps larger." In this interesting communication Lord Rosse suggests what he afterwards accomplished, that the motion for producing a *parabolic curve*, "might be imitated by means of the eccentric guides, and the slow circular motion of the speculum, and with this advantage, that, were it found really successful, the same result would probably be always afterwards obtained."

Before the year 1830, Lord Rosse had made still farther advances towards the great object he had in view. He found from many experiments that he could not cast a speculum of the moderate dimensions of 15 inches, without reducing the composition considerably below the highest standard, that is without using so much copper as to produce a soft and yellowish metal. All the specula cracked in annealing when the proper composition was employed. In order to get over this difficulty, he tried to cast the specula in different pieces, and to unite them by tinning their surfaces; but though this was practicable, he abandoned it for the following plan. He found that an alloy of copper 2.75 parts, with 1 of zinc, expanded and contracted with a change of temperature in the same degree as speculum metal, and was an alloy malleable, ductile, and easily worked. With this alloy he cast a spe-

culum 15 inches in diameter, with a rim and ribs behind. It was turned smooth and flat on one side, and tinned. Six pieces of the highest speculum metal,  $1\frac{1}{4}$ th of an inch thick, were then placed on the flat tinned surface, so as to complete a circular disc 15 inches in diameter, and when soldered to it, composed a *plated speculum*. When ground and polished, it formed an excellent telescope of twelve feet focal length. Upon the same plan Lord Rosse constructed a speculum *two feet* in diameter, for a telescope *twenty-six feet* long. Hitherto it had been believed by opticians, that a fine polish could not be given to specula, unless when the polisher became dry and hot; but Lord Rosse at this stage of his researches found out a method of polishing a cold metal upon a moist polisher, an object of very great importance, as a speculum should be polished at the same temperature at which it is to be used.

The next step in Lord Rosse's progress was to make a plated speculum, *three feet* in diameter. The proportions of copper and tin, which he found to be best, were the *definite* ones of *four* atoms of copper to *one* of tin, or 126·4 parts of copper to 58·9 of tin, or 32 of the one to 14·91 of the other. After preparing the alloy speculum, which was to be plated, and turning it to a radius of 54 feet, Lord Rosse proceeded to cast the small plates of speculum metal, about 9 inches square. In doing this he encountered great difficulties, owing to their extreme brittleness, arising, no doubt, from the too rapid cooling of their edges, and the consequent state of tension. In order to remove this evil, he sawed the plates with a circular sawing disc of iron, immersed in emery and water, and he so far succeeded that he obtained plates with which he composed a *two feet* speculum. He also used the same plates originally for the *three feet* one, but before the combination was completed, he discovered the true process of casting specula of all sizes. In order to produce uniformity of cooling, he tried two ways of constructing the mould. The *first* was to make the lower surface of the mould, containing the liquid speculum, absorb the heat rapidly, and the upper retain it; and the *second* was to cool the lower surface, while the heat of the upper surface was undiminished. The first plan did not succeed; but the second did, by making the lower surface of the mould of iron, and the upper of sand; but though the castings were sound, there was this defect, that bubbles of air were entangled between the iron disc and the speculum metal, producing cavities which it was troublesome to grind out. Hence he was led to replace the iron disc, by one made of pieces of hoop iron, placed side by side with their edges up, tightly packed in an iron frame, the surface, thus composed of edges, being smoothed to the proper curvature, by filing or turning. By this most ingenious process, he

constructed a metallic surface every where open, as the closest plates allowed the air to pass freely between them.

"So successful was this expedient," says Lord Rosse, "that of *sixteen* plates cast for the *three feet* speculum, not one was defective. The following particulars require to be attended to. The disc of hoop iron should be as thick as the speculum to be cast upon it, so as to cool it with sufficient rapidity; it requires to be warm, so that there may be no moisture deposited upon it from the sand; it may be heated to  $212^{\circ}$ , without materially lessening its cooling power. The metal should enter the mould by the side, as is usual in iron founding, but much quicker, almost instantaneously; one second is sufficient for filling the mould of a nine inch plate or speculum. As to the temperature of the metal, this can best be ascertained by stirring it with a wooden pole occasionally, after it has become perfectly fluid; when the carbon of the pole reduces the oxide on the surface of the metal, rendering it brilliant like quicksilver, the heat is sufficient. When the metal has become solid in the ingate or hole through which it enters the mould, the plate is to be removed quickly to an oven heated a little below redness, to remain till cold, which, where the plates are nine inches in diameter, should be *three or four days* at least."—*Phil. Trans.*, 1840, p. 511.

When the nine inch plates are properly scraped and cleaned, much attention is necessary in soldering them upon the tinned surface of the alloy speculum. Care must be taken that until the tin on the speculum is fused, the melted resin must not be poured in between the plates.

The great success which attended this new method of casting these nine inch specula, induced Lord Rosse to try it on a large scale, and he accordingly proceeded with one *twenty inches*, and another *three feet*, which on the first trial were cast perfect. The crucibles which he employed were made of cast iron, and cast with their mouths upwards; and the fuel used was peat or wood, which are both preferable to coke.

A perfect speculum being thus obtained, the next object to be accomplished is to work it, by grinding and polishing, to a perfect spherical figure. The machine for this purpose, which we have already described, was improved and enlarged so as to work a speculum *three feet* in diameter, and after several years experience, during which specula have been ground and polished with it many hundred times, it has been found to work large surfaces with a degree of precision unattainable by the hand. The peculiarity in this process, introduced by Lord Rosse, and as we conceive essential to success, is, that the polisher works *above* and upon the face of the speculum to be polished, and one singular advantage of this arrangement is, that the figure of the speculum can be examined as the operation proceeds, without

removing the speculum, which when a ton weight is no easy matter. The contrivance for doing this is so beautiful, and has proved so useful, that we must briefly explain it. The machine is placed in a room at the bottom of a high tower, in the successive floors of which trap-doors can be opened. A mast is elevated on the top of the tower, so that its summit is about 90 feet above the speculum. A dial-plate is attached to the top of the mast, and a small plane speculum and eye-piece, with proper adjustments, are so placed that the combination becomes a Newtonian telescope, and the dial-plate the object.

During the operation of polishing the larger specula, a variety of difficulties occurred, but they were all surmounted by the ingenuity and patience of Lord Rosse. At first, in order to allow a lateral expansion of the pitch, it appeared necessary to increase the thickness of the bed of pitch as the diameter of the speculum was increased. This proved a failure, and the lateral expansion was provided for by making grooves in the pitch; but these grooves, though there were two sets at right angles to each other, and only two inches distant, were with difficulty kept open, and the polisher lost its figure. All these evils, however, were removed by furrowing the polisher itself, so as to divide it into definite and insulated portions. The effect of this improvement was so great, that the plated or divided *three feet* speculum defined better with a power of 1200 than it had previously done with a power of 300. In place of pitch, Lord Rosse used, as his polishing surface, a mixture of common resin and turpentine, and this composition was laid on in two strata of different degrees of hardness, the outer one being the harder, the subjacent softer layer expanding laterally, so as to preserve the figure of the polisher. The speculum being placed in a cistern of water, the polishing process is then effected by using peroxide of iron and water, of about the consistence of thin cream.

The last and the most important part of the process of working the speculum, is to give it a *true parabolic figure*, that is, such a figure that each portion of it should reflect the incident ray to the same focus. This grand difficulty has been completely mastered by Lord Rosse. The operations for this purpose consist, 1st. Of a stroke of the first eccentric, which carries the polisher along *one-third* of the diameter of the speculum. 2d. A transverse stroke 21 times slower, and equal to 0.27 of the same diameter, measured on the edge of the tank, or 1.7 beyond the centre of the polisher. 3d. A rotation of the speculum performed in the same time as 37 of the first strokes; and 4th. A rotation of the polisher in the same direction about sixteen times slower. If these rules are attended to, the machine will give the true parabolic figure to the speculum, whether it be *six inches* or *three feet* in diameter. In the three-



feet speculum, the figure is so true, with the whole aperture, that it is thrown out of focus by a motion of less than the *thirtieth of an inch*, "and even with a single lens of one-eighth of an inch focus, giving a power of 2592, the dots on a watch dial are still in some degree defined."

The *twenty-six* feet telescope thus executed, has a general resemblance to that of Ramage, but the tube, gallery, and vertical axis of the stand are counterpoised. It is used as a Newtonian telescope, with a small plane speculum, to prevent the image being deformed by oblique reflection, which is the effect of the front view. When the specula are not used they are preserved from moisture and acid vapours by connecting their boxes with chambers containing quick lime, an arrangement which Dr. Robinson had applied for several years to the Armagh reflector.

When this telescope was completed, it became an object of high interest to ascertain its performance. In doing this, Dr. Robinson had, as he remarks, "the advantage of the assistance of one of the most celebrated of British astronomers, Sir James South;" but the weather, the state of the air, and the light of the moon, between the 29th October and 8th November 1840, were unfavourable. The following is the substance of Dr. Robinson's report:—

"Both specula, the divided and the solid, seem exactly parabolic, there being no sensible difference in the focal adjustment of the eye-piece with the whole aperture of 36 inches, or one of twelve; in the former case there is more flutter, but apparently no difference in definition, and the eye-piece comes to its place of adjustment very sharply.

"The solid speculum showed  $\alpha$  Lyrae round and well-defined, with powers up to 1000 inclusive, and at moments even with 1600; but the air was not fit for so high a power on any telescope. Rigel, two hours from the meridian, with 600, was round, the field quite dark, the companion separated by more than a diameter of the star from its light, and so brilliant that it would certainly be visible long before sunset.

" $\zeta$  Orionis, well defined, with all the powers from 200 to 1000, with the latter a wide black separation between the stars; 32 Orionis and 31 Canis minoris were also well separated.

"It is scarcely possible to preserve the necessary sobriety of language, in speaking of the moon's appearance with this instrument, which discovers a multitude of new objects at every point of its surface. Among these may be named a mountainous tract near Ptolemy, every ridge of which is dotted with extremely minute craters, and two black parallel stripes in the bottom of Aristarchus.\*

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\* Dr. Robinson, in his address to the British Association, on the 24th August, 1843, stated, that in this telescope, a building the size of the one in which they were assembled would, under favourable circumstances, be easily visible on the Lunar surface.—*Athenæum*, Sept. 23, p. 867.

"There could be little doubt of the high illuminating power of such a telescope, yet an example or two may be desirable. Between  $\epsilon^1$  and  $\epsilon^2$  Lyrae, there are two faint stars, which Sir J. Herschel (Phil. Trans. 1824) calls 'debilissima,' and which seem to have been, at that time, the only set visible in the 20 feet reflector. These, at the altitude of  $18^\circ$  were visible *without an eye-glass*, and also when the aperture was contracted to 12 inches. With an aperture of 18 inches, power 600, they and two other stars (seen in Mr. Cooper's achromatic of 13.2 inches aperture, and the Armagh reflector of 15 inches) are easily seen. With the whole aperture, a fifth is visible, which Dr. R. had not before noticed. November 5th, strong moonlight.

"In the nebula of Orion, the fifth star of the trapezium is easily seen with either speculum, even when the aperture is contracted to 18 inches. The divided speculum will not show the sixth with the whole aperture, on account of that sort of disintegration of large stars already noticed, but does, in favourable moments, when contracted to 18 inches. With the solid mirror and whole aperture, it stands out conspicuously under all the powers up to 1000, and even with 18 inches it is not likely to be overlooked.

"Among the few nebulae examined were 13 Messier, in which the central mass of stars was more distinctly separated, and the stars themselves larger than had been anticipated; the great nebula of Orion and that of Andromeda showed no appearance of resolution, but the small nebula near the latter is clearly resolvable. This is also the case with the ring nebula of Lyra; indeed, Dr. R. thought it was resolved at its minor axis; the fainter nebulous matter which fills it is irregularly distributed, having several stripes or wisps in it, and there are four stars near it, besides the one figured by Sir John Herschel, in his catalogue of nebulae. It is also worthy of notice, that this nebula, instead of that regular outline which he has there given it, is fringed with appendages, branching out into the surrounding space, like those of 13 Messier, (Sir J. H.'s, 86,) and in particular, having prolongations brighter than the others in the direction of the major axis, longer than the ring's breadth. A still greater difference is found in 1 Messier, described by Sir John Herschel, as 'a barely resolvable cluster,' and drawn, fig. 81, with a fine elliptic boundary. This telescope, however, shows the stars, as in his figure 89, and some more plainly, while the general outline, besides being irregular and fringed with appendages, has a deep bifurcation to the south.\*"

In a Paper entitled "Observations on some of the nebulae communicated to the Royal Society on the 13th of June last, Lord Rosse has given sketches of *five* of the nebulae in Sir John Herschel's Catalogue,† numbered 88, 81, 26, 29, and 47, as seen in his three feet specula, and as soon as this paper is printed, the comparison of these drawings with those of Sir John Herschel, will exhibit the power of the new telescope.

\* *Phil. Trans.*, 1833. P. 503.

† Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy, No. 25, pp. 8-11. Nov. 9, 1840.

Fig. 26 of Sir J. Herschel's Catalogue (Messier, 27) called the *Dumb-bell* Nebula, from its supposed resemblance to a dumb-bell, is shewn by Lord Rosse's telescope to be a cluster of stars, or rather two clusters in close proximity, and, indeed, to a certain extent, blended together, and without the exact elliptical terminations of Herschel's figure.

Fig. 81 of Sir J. Herschel's Catalogue (Messier, 51,) seen as an oval nebula by both these astronomers, is found to be a cluster of stars remarkable for its singular appearance, the ramifications from its southern extremity extending to a distance equal to its major axis, and giving it the appearance of a scorpion.

Fig. 45 of Sir J. Herschel's Catalogue is a perfectly circular planetary nebula; but Lord Rosse has discovered it to be an annular nebula like the elliptical annular nebula in Lyra (29, Sir J. Herschel's Catalogue, and 57 Messier) but very much more difficult to be seen.

Fig. 49 of Sir J. Herschel's Catalogue is represented as a remarkable round planetary nebula, containing three stars, one at each of the three vertices of an equilateral triangle: Lord Rosse's telescope shows this as a *long irregular patch*, with about *seven* stars in it, grouped unsymmetrically.

These are a few interesting examples of the manner in which the new telescope has resolved nebulae into stars, and has destroyed that symmetry of form in globular nebulae, upon which was founded the hypothesis of the gradual condensation of nebulous matter into suns and planets.

Such is a brief account of the construction and performance of a telescope which Dr. Robinson characterizes as the most powerful that has ever been made. Its superiority to all other instruments must have been very gratifying to Lord Rosse, and might have justified him in resting from his labours, and enjoying the honour of having triumphed in so noble an undertaking: But the instrument was scarcely out of his hands before he resolved upon attempting the construction of another reflector, with a speculum *six feet* in diameter, and *fifty feet* long! This magnificent instrument was accordingly undertaken, and within the last month has been brought to a successful termination. The speculum has *six feet* of clear aperture, and therefore an area *four* times greater than that of the *three feet* speculum, and it weighs nearly *four tons*! The focal length is 53 feet. It was polished in *six hours*, in the same time as a small speculum, and with the same facility; and no particular care was taken in preparing the polisher, as Lord Rosse intended to repolish it as soon as the focal length was ascertained to be correct; but upon directing it to a nebula, the performance was better than he expected, and he therefore has suffered it to remain in the tube for the present. The

second or duplicate speculum, not yet finished, is in every respect the same in size. It was only three weeks in the annealing oven, and is reckoned very good.

The casting of a speculum of nearly four tons must have been an object of great interest, as well as of difficulty; but every difficulty was foreseen and provided against. In order to ensure uniformity of metal, the blocks from the first melting, which was effected in three furnaces, were broken up, and the pieces from each of the furnaces were placed in three separate casks, A, B, and C. Then in charging the crucibles for the final melting of the speculum, successive portions from cask A were put into furnaces *a*, *b*, and *c*, from B into *b*, *c*, *d*, and so on.

In order to prevent the metal from bending or changing its form, Lord Rosse has introduced a very ingenious and effective support. The speculum rests upon a surface of twenty-seven pieces of cast iron, of equal area, and strongly framed so as to be stiff and light. There are twelve of these in the outer rim, nine in the next, and six sectors at the centre. Each of these pieces is supported at its centre of gravity on a hemispheric bearing, at the angle of a triangle of cast iron, these triangles being in their turn similarly supported at the angles of three primary triangles, which, again, are supported at their centres of gravity by three screws which work in a strong iron frame, and serve for adjusting the mirrors. This frame carries also levers to give lateral support to the speculum, in the same diffused manner. This frame, which contains the speculum, is attached to an immense joint, like that of a pair of compasses moving round a pin, in order to give the transverse motion for following the star in right ascension. This pin is fixed to the centre piece between two trunnions, like those of an enormous mortar, lying east and west, and upon which the telescope has its motion in altitude. To the frame there is fastened a large cubical wooden box, about eight feet a side, in which there is a door through which two men go in to remove, or to replace the cover of the mirror. To this box is fastened the tube, which is made of deal staves, hooped like a huge cask. It is about 40 feet long, and 8 feet diameter in the middle, and is furnished with internal diaphragms, about  $6\frac{1}{2}$  feet in aperture. The Dean of Ely walked through the tube with an umbrella up!

This enormous tube is established between two lofty piers or walls of castellated architecture, about sixty feet high, one of which carries an iron semicircle, against which the tube bears when in the meridian. The declinations, will, therefore, be given in this case by a circle and level, as in Troughton's Transit Instruments. The celestial object is followed in right ascension by drawing the telescope from this plane through a range

of fourteen feet, with a long screw, moved either by hand or by a clock, with a rate variable with the declination. The hour angle will, in such cases, be obtained by another circle and level. The other pier carries the galleries for the observers, which, for fear of producing tremor, Lord Rosse was unwilling to attach to the tube. The galleries will consist of three stages, with some help from ladders, each stage being pushed forward in succession from the top of the piers.

This immense mass of matter weighing about twelve tons, requires to be counterpoised, and Lord Rosse's arrangements for this purpose are most ingeniously contrived. When in the zenith, the tendency of the telescope to fall is nothing, but on each side it gradually increases, and is a maximum at the horizon. The first plan of a counterpoise was this. A chain attached to the upper end of the tube passes over a pulley, and carries the counterpoise which rolls on a curved railway, which can be so formed that the telescope may be in equilibrium through its whole range. The arrangements for this contrivance are already made, but Lord Rosse intends to try a much simpler method, in which the weight, in place of rolling, is kept attached to a fixed point by a guy, so that when the tube is low the weight acts to great mechanical advantage, and when high with less advantage.

Such is a brief description of the noble telescope completed by the Earl of Rosse—a telescope gigantic even among the giant instruments which preceded it. In order to form an idea of its effective magnitude, we must compare it with other instruments, as in the following table, which contains the number of square inches in each speculum, on the supposition that they were square in place of round.

Names of Makers.	Diameter of Speculum.	Area of Surface.
Newton	1 inch	1 square inches
Hadley	2.37	5.6
Hadley	4½	20
Hadley	5	25
Hawksbee	9	81
Ramage	15	225
Ramage	21	441
Lord Rosse	2 feet	576
Lord Rosse	3	1296
Herschel	4	2304
Lord Rosse	6	5184
To be executed	{ 8-4	10000
To be executed	{ 10	14400
Lord Rosse's two 6 feet specula combined	}	10368

In glancing over the preceding table, and marking the rapid strides of the reflecting telescope, it is impossible to restrain the mind from anticipating still grander achievements. If Sir William Herschel made such a start a-head of his predecessors, and if Lord Rosse has taken such a flight beyond his first high position, may we not expect that he, or at least his successor in discovery, will execute the two instruments which we have placed below his own? But it is not merely in the course which has been already pursued, that we are to look for an extension of our astronomical knowledge. We have yet to try what can be effected by specula of moderate apertures and extremely long foci, in which the spherical aberration will almost disappear, for there can be no doubt that a true spherical figure can be more perfectly attained than a parabolic one. The value of fixed telescopes, too, kept in dry vaults of uniform temperature, into which the rays are to be admitted by plain reflectors, remains to be tried; and we venture to propose as practicable, *the combination of two or more specula in a single telescope*. If a six feet spherical speculum has its circular diaphragm of six feet converted into two of three feet each, the effect will be exactly the same as that produced by the combinations of two *three feet* spherical reflectors. Lord Rosse may, therefore, by the fine adjustments which he has already executed, unite his two *six feet* mirrors, and thus produce a speculum with a proportional area of 10368 square inches, exceeding in surface our hypothetical speculum of 8½ feet!

But our views must not be confined to the principle of reflexion. The Achromatic Telescope may yet take the start of reflectors, as it once did; and when we consider the successive steps of Lord Rosse's progress, we can scarcely doubt, that with his hands so skilful, and his head so stored with the chemistry of fusion, and the physics of annealing, lenses of flint and crown glass may yet be executed of gigantic magnitude, or even meniscuses of plate glass to hold gallons of fluid for the construction of aplanatic object-glasses.

In cherishing these high expectations, we have not forgotten that the state of our atmosphere must put some limit to the magnifying power of our telescopes. In our variable climate, indeed, the vapours, and local changes of temperature, and consequent inequalities of refraction, offer various obstructions to the extension of astronomical discovery. But we must meet the difficulty in the only way in which it can be met. The astronomer cannot command a thunder-storm to cleanse the atmosphere, and he must therefore undertake a pilgrimage to better climates—to Egypt or to India, in search of a purer and more homogeneous medium;—or even to the flanks of the Himalaya and the Andes,

that he may erect his watch-tower above the grosser regions of the atmosphere. In some of those brief yet lucid intervals which precede or follow rain, when the remotest objects present themselves in sharp outline and minute detail, discoveries of the highest value might be grasped by the lynx-eyed astronomer. The resolution of a nebula—the bisection of a double star—the details of a planet's ring—the evanescent markings on its disc—or perhaps the display of some of the dark worlds of Bessel—might be the revelations of a moment, and would amply repay the transportation of a huge telescope to the shoulder or to the summit of a lofty mountain.

In looking back upon what the telescope has accomplished;—in reckoning the thousands of celestial bodies which have been detected and surveyed;—in reflecting on the vast depths of ether which have been sounded, and on the extensive fields of sidereal matter out of which worlds and systems of worlds are forming, and to be formed—can we doubt it to be the Divine plan that man shall yet discover the whole scheme of the visible universe, and that it is his individual duty, as well as the high prerogative of his order to expound its mysteries, and to develop its laws? Over the invisible world he has received no commission to reign, and into its secrets he has no authority to pry. It is over the material and the visible that he has to sway the intellectual sceptre—it is among the structures of organic and inorganic life that his functions of combination and analysis are to be chiefly exercised. Nor is this a task unworthy of his genius, or unconnected with his destiny. Placed upon a globe already formed, and constituting part of a system already complete, he can scarcely trace either in the solid masses around him, or in the forms and movements of the planets, any of those secondary causes by which these bodies have been shaped and launched on their journey. But in the distant heavens, where creation seems to be ever active, where vast distance gives us the vision of huge magnitudes, and where extended operations are actually going on, we may study the cosmogony of our own system, and mark, even during the brief span of human life, the formation of a planet in the consolidation of the nebulous mass which surrounds it.

Such is the knowledge which man has yet to acquire—such the lesson which he has to teach his species. How much to be prized is the intellectual faculty by which such a work is to be performed;—how wonderful the process by which the human brain, in its casket of bone, can alone establish such remote and transcendental truths. A soul so capacious, and ordained for such an enterprise, cannot be otherwise than immortal.

But even when all these mysteries shall be revealed, the mind will still wrestle with eager curiosity to learn the final destiny of

such glorious creations. The past and the present furnish some grounds of anticipation. Revelation throws in some faint touches of its light ;—but it is in the indications of science chiefly—in the results of mechanical laws—that we are likely to find any sure elements for our judgment. In the creations around and near us all is change and decomposition. The solid globe, once incandescent, and scarcely cooled, has been the theatre of recurring convulsions, by which every thing has been destroyed, and after which every thing has been renewed. Animal life in its varied organizations has perished, and written its epitaph upon imperishable monuments. Man too, though never extinct as a race, returns one by one to his clay, and his intellectual functions are perpetuated in the reproduction of his fellow. In the solar system, we see fragments of planets—asteroids, as they have been called—occupying, in almost interlacing orbits, the place of a larger body ; and in the direction and amount of the annual and diurnal motions of the primary and secondary planets, we recognize the result of a grand creative movement, by which the sun, with its widely extended atmosphere, or a revolving atmosphere itself, has cast off, by successive throes, the various bodies of the system, at first circling in gaseous zones, but subsequently contracted into planets and a sun.

This system, so wonderfully formed, is again enchained with another more distant by an assemblage of comets—a class of bodies which doubtless carry on some reciprocal intercourse for the benefit of both. Composed of nebulous matter, they may yet be consolidated into habitable globes ; and resembling in aspect the vast nebulae which fill the sidereal spaces, and forming a part of our own system, they countenance the theory, that the nebulae which the telescope cannot resolve may be the pabulum out of which heat and motion are to form new systems, where planets, thrown off from a central nucleus, will form new abodes of life and intelligence.

But while all the phenomena in the heavens indicate a law of progressive creation, in which revolving matter is distributed into suns and planets, there are indications in our own system, that a period has been assigned for its duration, which, sooner or later, it must reach. The medium which fills universal space—whether it be a luminiferous ether, or arise from the indefinite expansion of planetary atmospheres—must retard the bodies which move in it, even though it were 360,000 millions of times more rare than atmospheric air ; and, with its time of revolution gradually shortening, the satellite must return to its planet, the planet to its sun, and the sun to its primeval nebula. The fate of our system, thus deduced from mechanical laws, must be the fate of all others. Motion cannot be perpetuated in a resist-



ing medium ; and where there exist disturbing forces, there must be primarily derangement, and ultimately ruin. From the great central mass, heat may again be summoned to exhale nebulous matter ;—chemical forces may again produce motion, and motion may again generate systems ; but—as in the recurring catastrophes which have desolated our earth, the great First Cause must preside at the dawn of each cosmical cycle—and, as in the animal races which were successively reproduced, new celestial creations, of a nobler form of beauty, and of a higher order of permanence, may yet appear in the sidereal universe. “Behold, I create new heavens and a new earth, and the former shall not be remembered.” “The new heavens and the new earth shall remain before me.” “Let us look, then, according to his promise, for the new heavens and the new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.”

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*The Public and Private Life of Lord Chancellor Eldon, with Selections from his Correspondence.* By HORACE TWISS, Esq. Three vols., 8vo. London, 1844.

IN an age which, unlike that in which Tacitus wrote, is little liable to the charge of being “*incuriosa suorum*,” this is one of the best biographies, in a literary point of view, that has lately appeared. To write a good life, if not the highest effort of narrative talent, must be one of the most difficult, if we are to judge by the frequency of failure. The incidents, indeed, in the lives of ordinary men, which are of the greatest personal importance to themselves, seldom have enough of point or peculiarity to raise interest in the mind of the general reader ; and the biography of many a man whose days have been spent in stirring scenes, and who may have contributed to the great events of his age, may yet, when in the hands of an historian, be little more readable than a merchant’s day-book.

There is, however, one secret of story-telling, of which, when the subject admits of it, the biographer may avail himself with great effect. It has been very truly said, that if all the little events of any man’s life were narrated from day to day, they would in the end make an interesting book. Perhaps this may arise from the interest we always take in the development of unforeseen results from any regular progress of events ; or perhaps it is a branch of that implanted curiosity which creates in all male and female hearts so great a sympathy in their neighbours’ concerns, and makes a dinner party or a wedding next

door the subject of mysterious speculation and interest. But certain it is, that this sort of Dutch painting acquires, from its mere detail, a charm, of which the prominent features of the piece may be totally destitute; and the story of how the most commonplace man living ate, slept, and spoke, will sometimes enchain the attention of a reader who would yawn in disgust over pages of bygone Parliamentary eloquence, or the tale of how forgotten fields were won.

It was a conformation of mind fitting him peculiarly for this style of writing, that made Boswell the prince of biographers; and similar qualities in the author gave its character and popularity to Pepys' Diary. Both men of contracted mental vision, the little things they did see made a strong impression on them, and they described them with a vividness and minuteness which greater minds would have thought frivolous. Mr. Twiss has just borrowed enough from their example to give us the little as well as the great incidents in Lord Eldon's life, and has in consequence produced a very diverting and agreeable book, which, if it does not present the hero of it personally before us, has at least the merit of appearing to do so. In the career of a man, from small beginnings and by slow progress, to the heights of power and fame, enjoyed during the most protracted span of human life, he had an admirable subject; and he has used the materials placed at his disposal with great judgment and discrimination, so as to give a lively current to the stream of his narrative, and to avoid being either cursory or prolix. The history flows smoothly on, diversified by a great variety of letters and anecdotes, which reflect vividly the mind and character of his subject, and show him painted by his own hand. The praise of being a very clever and interesting book we most willingly accord to it; and we believe we only express the opinion of it universally entertained. It has other qualities in point of ability, which are less entitled to approbation.

If we turn from the execution of the work, viewed merely as a literary composition, to inquire how far the author has executed his task with fidelity or truth, and done his best to hand down to posterity the true image of a great public character, extenuating nothing, and setting nought down in *italice*, our opinion of it is neither so decided nor so favourable. Surrounded by the personal friends of the subject of his history, and trammelled by party connexion, the task he undertook was certainly a difficult one, if he had any ambition to rise above the level of a mere panegyrist, and to write for the instruction of future times, rather than please the prejudices of a *coterie*. Perhaps the circumstances under which he wrote, made Mr. Twiss incapable

of impartial judgment. Had he been to award praise and censure with the stern justice of history, he must have given offence to those by whom his materials were intrusted to him, and the great political party of which Lord Eldon was the type. He may hint a fault in one place, or lay on the colours more faintly in another; but we did not expect, when we opened the book, to find justice meted strictly out—and we did not. We find what we like worse than even pure and indiscriminate laudation: what seems a sedulous and not unsuccessful attempt to create false impressions, and studious efforts to conceal and colour over all circumstances which might have an unfavourable effect upon the reader. While there is a manifest, and almost avowed determination to uphold Lord Eldon throughout, it is done with an air of candour and liberality, as if the reader was put in possession of all the writer knew; while truly we cannot help feeling, that in a great many instances, there is a very plausible and skilful effort to delude. If this be in any degree a well-founded criticism, the book, whatever may be its ability, ceases to deserve any respect or favour.

The suspicion we have now expressed, is chiefly derived from a perusal of the work itself. The sources of accurate information on the various incidents of so long a life, wrapped up, for the most part, in the secrecy of office, are, of course, in a great degree, remote and inaccessible to the ordinary critic, and are far more open to the biographer than to us. Nor did the impression strike us at first. On the contrary, the interest of the narrative, and the candour of the style, had well nigh so far beguiled us, as to lead us to believe, when we concluded it, that Lord Eldon was all that our author represents him—conscientious, high minded, and pure, throughout all his public career. But on maturer reading, glimpses of the truth are seen. That he was a man of rare endowments, and achieved great things, no one can deny; but that he was not the man Mr. Twiss has drawn him, the book itself contains enough to demonstrate.

Our quarrel with our author is not merely that he has written a *party* book. This he avows in the preface, where he says—

“In such a memoir, a total absence of political feeling would have been hardly attainable, and perhaps not desirable. The life of any modern statesman, if written without a general sympathy in his political views, must have a coldness and flatness, which no tone of impartiality could redeem. The writer of these pages, therefore, though he presumes, in some important instances—even in one so momentous as that of the Catholic Question—to dissent from Lord Eldon’s opinions, has not affected an air of indifference as to those stirring questions of politics in which Lord Eldon was mixed, and still less as to

those party attacks of which he was individually the object. Where the course of the work has led the author into contact with such subjects, he has thought it best to deal with them frankly."—Vol. i., Preface.

To a certain extent, there may be some truth in this assertion. It would be difficult for a man who had no sympathy with Lord Eldon's principles to admire, or, perhaps, to do justice to his public character. At the same time, Mr. Twiss carries his vocation too far. He does not "deal with them frankly." It was not necessary that the biographer should so indiscriminately defend every act in a life of politics so much exposed to observation, or that, from the Treason Trials of 1794, to the Bill of Pains and Penalties, every step in his career should be so resolutely vindicated. The time has gone by for such views. Lord Eldon himself was left at last, not like a "great sea mark, saving all that eyed him," but like a vessel moored at spring-tide, which the receding waves had left dry. Mr. Twiss, however, is ambitious of a share of his great leader's reputation; and following in his steps, breaks out into the following obsolete lamentation over the Reform Bill:—

"Wielding this powerful combination of forces, Lord Eldon was enabled, through many a long year of untiring energy, to break the successive tides of revolution,—until at length, in 1831, the ill-starred conjunction of the royal with the democratic will, gave that sinister heave to the constitution which has wrenched it from its frame, and converted its administration from a systematic government to a succession of conflicts, each doubtful in its issue, and each more dangerous than its antecedent. But, in whatever shape and at whatever season the consequences of that dislocation may come upon us, those who honour the memory of Lord Eldon will have the pride of reflecting, that, to the latest practicable moment, he stood up for the ancient safeguards of the crown and the people; and that when at length the constitution was laid low—when the seal of its doom had been extorted by duress from the Peers, and the House of Commons was levelled to a national convention—even then, at an age surpassing the common limits of mortality, that venerable man refused to despair of his country, and set the brave example of a reaction which has raised up one chance more to England, for regulating the liberties of her people, and restoring the security of her state."—Vol. i., p. 20.

This reads like some fragment of a speech spoken, or intended to be spoken, in the debates on Schedule A. Much folly was spoken, and many idle prophecies ventured, in the excitement of that time: but the most foolish of all the forebodings, was the notion, that wealth and rank were to lose their influence through the Reform Bill. Whatever defects it had, there never was a measure which was less entitled to the epithet of revolutionary. It

has not destroyed the Tory party; on the contrary, it has resuscitated them, and that on a firmer basis than any that supported them in the precarious and slippery times of which our author writes. It did, indeed, much to destroy back-stair influence—influence, however, which Whigs, as well as Tories, could use, and which would have stood sadly in the way of Mr. Twiss and his friends, after the Whigs were once firmly in power. But as Lord Eldon lamented over the Catholic Relief Bill, so does Mr. Twiss think it decent to shed a few tears of sympathy over Gaton and Old Sarum, as a fitting qualification for the eulogist of one who, during his long life, was never known to support a single measure of reformation, or to oppose any ancient abuse.

But the mere confession of faith volunteered by Mr. Twiss might be passed with very lenient censure. It is about as harmless as the Jacobite predilections which clung to the generation of our Scottish lairds which has just passed away. Lord Eldon's political belief, although sufficiently antiquated in theory, was, as we shall see, far more practical; and though he very stoutly fought for the abuses in the constitution which remained, he did not waste his time or his power in mourning for the departed glories of the Star Chamber.

When, however, we are told by a biographer, that he is in possession of a vast mass of materials—many hundred original letters of his author, from which he makes such selections as suit his purpose; and when we are farther told, that his main intention is not to write with the unimpassioned pen of history, but with the bias and aim of a party politician—*surgit amari aliquid*—a jar comes on the ear with his smooth sentences; and we cannot help wishing often, that we had the means of knowing all that *is suppressed*, and of filling up many blanks which occur in the very crisis of expectation. Our misgiving is, that Mr. Twiss has produced all that served his turn, and omitted all that might foil it.

Had Mr. Twiss had the boldness to write for public and lasting reputation, he might have done truer justice to the memory of Lord Eldon, as well as to himself. The really great, or rather powerful points of his character and mind, were quite sufficient, with the partial romance of his early life, to have afforded all legitimate scope for eulogy. These are well and most successfully elucidated in this work. It has, beyond question, raised the reputation of its subject, as far as the attributes of great activity of mind, great sagacity of forethought, and great determination of purpose went to make up the public man. We had always thought of Lord Eldon as the greatest lawyer of his time, and, beyond that, as a skilful discerner of the signs of the horizon, and a knowing trimmer of his sails. In point of fact, he was

much more. He seems to have possessed in a very high degree, the power not of conceiving only, but accomplishing: an earnest and resolute will, joined with great dexterity in bending weaker men to his purpose. He never faltered in action. His doubts were all reserved for the judgment-seat. What he determined to do, he did; and never turned aside from his design as long as the possibility of accomplishment remained. He never found lions in his path, and whether his personal courage were as great as his biographer tells us, his moral nerves were most firmly strung, and no weak misgivings or compunctious visitings ever stayed his hand. Thus, from the death of Pitt, he was truly the minister, and as far as the fact confers honour, he ruled this country for more than twenty years.

In the history of such a man, it needed not that his biographer should assume for him virtues which he never had, or conceal or gloss over failings or misdeeds which were as much bound up with his character and reputation as the qualities which balance them. Suspicion is thus thrown on the whole narrative. This we shall endeavour to analyze with some little care, and try at once to infuse into our pages something of the agreeable storytelling of the work, and also to enable our readers to judge how far our criticism is well founded.

The principal materials on which Mr. Twiss proceeds, besides the public channels of information, are a large collection of original letters of Lord Eldon, chiefly to his daughters, and a manuscript anecdote-book, compiled by Lord Eldon himself, during the later years of his life. The last has been of essential service to the work. The stories are well and racily told, and we were rather surprised, that a man who found such extreme difficulty in expressing himself with brevity and clearness on public business, should make so good, lively, and terse a *raconteur*.

Lord Eldon was the son of Mr. John Scott, coalfitter in Newcastle, a man of considerable weight in that town, and carrying on an extensive trade. He was born at Newcastle on the 4th of June 1751. His elder brother, Lord Stowell, was born on the 17th of September 1745, under circumstances of some peculiarity, which had a remarkable effect on the fortunes of the two brothers in after life. The story is thus told:—

“ On the 17th of September, 1745, the city of Edinburgh had surrendered to the Pretender's army, whose road to London lay directly through Newcastle. The town walls were planted with cannon, and every preparation was made for a siege. In this state of things, Mrs. Scott's family were anxious that she should remove to a quieter and safer place. The narrow lanes, or, as they are called, chares of Newcastle, resembling the wynds of Edinburgh, communicate from the upper part of the town to the quay side, and in one of these named

Love Lane, which is in the parish of All Saints, stood the residence of Mr. William Scott, conveniently situate for the shipping with which he was connected; but the line of the town wall at that time ran along the quay between Love Lane and the River Tyne: and the gates having been closed and fortified, egress in any ordinary way appeared almost impossible. This obstacle, however, was overcome by the courage of Mrs. Scott, who caused herself to be hoisted over the wall in a large basket, and descended safely on the water-side, where a boat lay in readiness. It conveyed her to Heworth, a village distant only about four miles from Newcastle, but situate on the southern side of the Tyne, within the county palatine of Durham; and at Heworth she gave birth to the twins William and Barbara."—Vol. i., p. 26.

Lord Stowell having been thus born in the county of Durham, was eligible for a scholarship, which fell vacant for that diocese, in Corpus Christi College, Oxford, which he succeeded in obtaining, and thus laid the foundation not only of his own, but of his still more successful brother's prosperity.

Lord Eldon's boyhood presents no feature of peculiar interest, excepting that he seems to have been noted at the Grammar School of Newcastle as a lad of great abilities, and to have indicated early that constant activity of mind, which was his characteristic through life. His education at home appears to have been attended to with considerable care, after the fashion of the old school, and the paternal lessons of propriety were rigidly enforced by frequent applications of the birch, apparently without any very softening effect on the unyielding material of the future Chancellor.

"I believe," said Lord Eldon, "I have preached more sermons than any one that is not a clergyman. My father always had the Church service read on the Sunday evenings, and a sermon after it. Harry and I used to take it in turns to read the prayers or to preach: we always had a shirt put over our clothes to answer for a surplice."

He does not, however, seem to have done great honour to his canonical costume, at least as far as a regard to truth is concerned, as he recounts in his anecdote-book, apparently with some pride, sundry instances of sturdy lying, the punishment of which seems to have made an impression on his memory, but to have effected anything but contrition for the offence. Indeed, it struck us as a trait of his character not altogether insignificant, that he never scrupled at direct untruths, even in his maturer frolics, as the anecdotes related on pp. 62-108, vol. i., may serve to illustrate.

On their teacher, however, in the Grammar School of Newcastle, the Rev. Hugh Moises, the Scotts appear to have produced a feeling of very deep and lasting affection. With great pride did the provincial schoolmaster watch the rising footsteps of his

two favourite pupils; and, to do them justice, they seem fully to have reciprocated his attachment. Lord Eldon kept up his correspondence with his old preceptor, amid all the honours and distinctions which future years showered on him. One of the first acts of his Chancellorship was to make Mr. Moises one of his chaplains. He twice afterwards offered him still more substantial preferment; but this the old man always sturdily declined:—

“I must be permitted to think,” he says, “that I shall be better entitled to your favourable opinion, shall certainly act in a manner more becoming my great age, to decline any distinctions of increased wealth or consequence.”

The patronage, however, which he declined for himself, was bestowed upon his family.

Lord Stowell having gone to Oxford, and commenced his career with great success, it was intended that John should follow his father's occupation. His brother, however, who knew his great abilities, would not allow them to be so buried. “Send Jack here,” he wrote from Oxford, “I can do better for him.” And to Oxford Jack was sent accordingly, and entered as a commoner of University College, in the year 1766, under the tutorship of his brother.

Of his journey to Oxford, he relates in his anecdote-book a story which deserves to be extracted, from the light it throws on one very ruling feature in his character—a feature for which in his meridian he was indebted for much of his great success, and which growing from a virtue almost into a disease, clogged the reputation, and destroyed the comfort of his later life:—

“‘I have seen it remarked,’ says Lord Eldon in his Anecdote Book, ‘that something which in early youth captivates attention, influences future life in all stages. When I left school in 1766 to go to Oxford, I came up from Newcastle to London in a coach, then denominated, on account of its quick travelling as travelling was then estimated, a fly; being, as well as I remember, nevertheless, three or four days and nights on the road: there was no such velocity as to endanger overturning or other mischief. On the pannels of the carriage were painted the words *‘Sat cito, si sat bene:’* words which made a most lasting impression on my mind, and have had their influence upon my conduct in all subsequent life. Their effect was heightened by circumstances during and immediately after the journey. Upon the journey a Quaker, who was a fellow-traveller, stopped the coach at the inn at Tuxford, desired the chamber-maid to come to the coach-door, and gave her a sixpence, telling her that he forgot to give it her when he slept there two years before. I was a very saucy boy, and said to him, ‘Friend, have you seen the motto on this coach?’—‘No.’—‘Then look at it: for I think giving her only sixpence *now* is neither *sat cito* nor *sat bene.*’ After I got to town, my brother, now Lord Stowell, met me



at the White Horse in Fetter Lane, Holborn, then the great Oxford house, as I was told. He took me to see the play at Drury Lane. Love played Jobson in the farce, and Miss Pope played Nell. When we came out of the house, it rained hard. There were then few hackney-coaches, and we got both into one sedan-chair. Turning out of Fleet Street into Fetter Lane, there was a sort of contest, between our chairmen and some persons who were coming up Fleet Street, whether they should first pass Fleet Street, or we in our chair first get out of Fleet Street into Fetter Lane. In the struggle, the sedan-chair was upset with us in it. This, thought I, is more than *sat cito*, and it certainly is not *sat bene*.—In short, in all that I have had to do in future life, professional and judicial, I have always felt the effect of this early admonition, on the pannels of the vehicle which conveyed me from school, '*Sat cito, si sat bene.*' It was the impression of this which made me that deliberative judge—as some have said, too deliberative;—and reflection upon all that is past will not authorize me to deny that, whilst I have been thinking '*sat cito, si sat bene,*' I may not have sufficiently recollected whether '*sat bene, si sat cito*' has had its due influence.'—Vol. i., p. 48, 50.

Some good sayings are recorded among the recollections of his early Oxford life, of which this, we think, is the best:—

"A clergyman had two churches, Newbury and Bibury; and instead of dividing the duties equally between them, chose always to perform the morning service at the former, and the evening service at the latter. Being asked his reason, he made answer: '*I go to nubere in the morning, because that is the time to marry; and I go to bibere in the evening, because that is the time to drink.*'"—Vol. i., p. 55, 56.

The only distinction which he acquired at Oxford, was gaining the Lichfield prize, by an "Essay on the Advantages and Disadvantages of Foreign Travel." He took his Bachelor's degree, and intended to prosecute his studies for the Church. But an event, fortunately as it turned out, averted the whole current of his life.

At a ball at Newcastle, young Scott had seen and admired a Miss Bessy Surtees, the daughter of a townsman of his father's, of great consideration in that quarter. The lady's image seems to have pursued the Oxonian to the banks of the Isis, and we find him pouring out sundry half-stifled lamentations on the subject, in his letters to his companions. Various temporary opportunities increased the attachment on both sides. And at last, to put an end to all objections or demurs on the part of either family, he eloped with her to Scotland on the 18th of November 1772.

The relations were highly displeased with the match, and the fortunes of the bridegroom were supposed to be so completely marred by this exploit, that a wealthy grocer in Newcastle offered

to his father to take him into partnership as the only means of establishing him respectably. The proposal was so far entertained as to be referred to William Scott for his opinion, but his answer in the negative preserved his brother for greater things.

Though Lord Eldon's conduct in the elopement is of course not a subject for eulogium, yet as far as appears in the biography he acted in a spirited and manly manner; and bore up without dismay against the frowns of his friends, and the unpromising prospect of the future. His marriage rendered it impossible for him to prosecute his views toward the Church, with any chance of success, unless a living should fall vacant in his College during the first year—and he accordingly resolved to turn himself to the law, and entered in the Middle Temple on the 28th of January 1773. He continued, however, to reside at Oxford, but prosecuted his legal studies with the greatest assiduity. The year of grace passed without any College living becoming vacant, and thus was his destiny conclusively fixed. While keeping his terms at the Temple, he continued his residence at Oxford, employed partly as tutor of University College during the years 1774-75, and partly as Deputy-Professor of Law, for which service he received £60 a-year. The commencement of his labours in the latter department were singularly felicitous.

"About this time, however, Mr. John Scott gave lectures on the law as deputy for Sir Robert Chambers the Vinerian Professor: and for this service he appears to have had £60 a year. Talking to Mrs. Forster of these lectures, Lord Eldon said,—'The most awkward thing that ever occurred to me was this: immediately after I was married, I was appointed Deputy Professor of Law at Oxford, and the law professor sent me the first lecture, which I had to read *immediately* to the students, and which I began without knowing a single word that was in it. It was upon the statute of young men running away with maidens. Fancy me reading, with about one hundred and forty boys and young men all giggling at the professor. Such a titling audience no one ever had.'"—Vol. i., p. 91.

This reminiscence of Dr. Johnson at Oxford is characteristic:—

"'If put out of temper he was not very moderate in the terms in which he expressed his displeasure. I remember, that, in the common room of University College, he was dilating upon some subject, and the then head of Lincoln College, Dr. Mortimer, was present. Whilst Johnson was stating what he proposed to communicate, the Doctor occasionally interrupted him, saying, 'I deny that.' This was often repeated, and observed upon by Johnson, as it was repeated, in terms expressive of increasing displeasure and anger. At length, upon the Doctor's repeating the words 'I deny that,' 'Sir, Sir,' said Johnson, 'you must have forgot that an author has said, *Plus negabit unus asinus in unâ horâ, quam centum philosophi probaverint in centum annis.*'"—Vol. i., p. 88.

He finally removed to London in 1775, considerably depressed in spirits as to his future prospects, which is not surprising, considering that he was almost without sixpence he could call his own, to support himself, his wife, and by this time their infant child, John, who was born on the 8th of March 1774. From his father and other relations he received little attention. Indeed, the generosity and kindness of his brother William, for which in after life he was always deeply grateful, were chiefly instrumental in enabling him to prosecute his views for the bar. His first house was in Cursitor Street, of which he used to say—"Many a time have I run down from Cursitor Street to Fleet Market, to get sixpenny worth of sprats for supper," (p. 96.) He was called to the bar on the 9th of February 1776.

" 'When I was called to the Bar,' said he to Mrs. Forster, 'Bessy and I thought all our troubles were over: business was to pour in, and we were to be almost rich immediately. So I made a bargain with her, that during the following year, all the money I should receive in the first eleven months should be mine, and whatever I should get in the twelfth month should be hers. What a stingy dog I must have been to make such a bargain! I would not have done so afterwards. But however, so it was; *that* was our agreement: and how do you think it turned out? In the twelfth month I received half a guinea; eighteen pence went for fees, and Bessy got nine shillings: in the other eleven months I got not one shilling.'"—Vol. i., p. 100.

Although he had little occupation in Westminster Hall, however, he was slowly laying the foundation of his great and deserved legal renown by most intense and unremitting application. It is impossible to rate too high the energetic and determined spirit with which, without any encouragement but his inward sense of power, he tasked himself to master every detail of his profession within his reach. It is here, perhaps, in his whole career, that he has most title to admiration, and that the truly masculine complexion of his mind shines out most clearly. In all his future exertions fame and power were glittering before him; but they would probably never have been his, if he had not with such unbending firmness, and such thorough mastering of his studies, gone through his course of labour, while clouds lowered all round him. If the life of Lord Eldon had no higher merit or utility, it would be invaluable as an example and encouragement to all who expect to achieve greatness, or would feel

"The spur, that the clear spirit doth raise"—  
 "To scorn delights, and live laborious days."

Amid his severer studies, however, he seems to have had a keen sense of the humorous, and to have picked up various stray

witticisms in his loiterings in Westminster Hall. The following is a diverting story of Dunning:—

“It is related that Mr. Dunning, who was the most eminent of the counsel practising in the Court of King’s Bench when Mr. Scott first entered the profession, ‘had, some years before, when Solicitor General, diverted himself by making an excursion, in vacation time, to Prussia. From his title of Solicitor-General, the King supposed him to be a general officer in the British army; so he invited him to a great review of his troops, and mounted him, as an eminent military person, upon one of his finest chargers. The charger carried the Solicitor-General through all the evolutions of the day, the ‘General’ in every movement being in a most dreadful fright, and the *Horse’s duty* never allowing him to dismount. He was so terrified and distressed by this great compliment, that he said he would never go abroad again as a general of any sort.’”—Vol. i., p. 310.

The dawn of brighter days for the young lawyer came on but slowly, and he was on the point of settling as a provincial counsel in his native town, when in 1780 he unexpectedly acquired great reputation by his argument in the case of *Ackroyd v. Smithson*. He was engaged single-handed against all the eminent counsel of the day: and, indeed, his argument seems to have been rather ultroneous. The case related to a lapsed share under a will, and he had got a guinea to consent for the heir-at-law. He told his employers that he would not give up the heir’s right to the lapsed share, but would argue the point, and that if it was to be given up, he must take his brief elsewhere. The attorney consulted his employer, who said, “Do not send good money after bad—let Mr. Scott have a guinea to give consent, and if he will argue, why let him do so, but give him no more.” Mr. Scott did argue, gained his point, settled the law ever afterwards, and made his own fortune.

The reputation he acquired on this occasion obtained for him the offer of the Recordership of Newcastle, which at the time was one too tempting to be declined in his circumstances, and he accordingly accepted it, and had taken a house in Newcastle, when his better angel again interposed. In March 1781, the counsel in an important election case (the Clitheroe petition) having been detained on circuit by illness, Scott, as a promising young counsel, was waited on at four in the morning, and requested to open the case at ten that day. He undertook the task, and accomplished it. The case proved long and famous, fees came rolling in, Scott replied at the end with great power, amid compliments from every side, and abandoned all thoughts of Newcastle. His success was now certain, and the tide of his fortunes bore him faster and faster on. In 1783, he received a patent of precedence as King’s Counsel, from the Coalition Mi-

nistry, and in the month of June of that year was elected Member of Parliament for the borough of Weobly.

Up to this period, the subject of Mr. Twiss's Memoir commands and deserves our deep interest. He fought a noble battle with adversity, and gained it by his own right arm, without patronage or favour. He did his best to redeem the early folly of his marriage, by risking his health and life in a struggle to gain comfort, affluence, and honour for the bride to whom he had no home to offer. It is impossible to read the story of his shifting fortunes without sympathy and emotion, and admiration and respect for the qualities which earned and commanded such success. The quality of sturdy independence is certainly far more prominent in this period of his career, than it ever was afterwards : and without saying at present that he learnt to bend more easily in the halls of great men, and the courts of princes, the virtue, if not destroyed or lessened, was much more seldom called into exercise in his days of prosperity.

We suspect Mr. Twiss overrates the position of Lord Eldon, as a pleader to a jury. We have never understood that in that capacity he stood in the first rank. His rare sagacity, and profound knowledge, must have made him a very wary and subtle counsel, both at Nisi Prius, and in his criminal practice ; but his speaking never was of a popular cast, and it is to do injustice to the reputation of so consummate a lawyer, to found it on the department in which he was least pre-eminent.

As a counterpart to the anecdote of Dr. Johnson, we insert a piece of professional pleasantry, of which his biographer was the victim.

“ ‘ At an assizes at Lancaster, we found Dr. Johnson's friend, Jemmy Boswell, lying upon the pavement,—*inebriated*. We subscribed at supper a guinea for him and half a crown for his clerk, and sent him, when he waked next morning, a brief with instructions to move, for what we denominated the writ of ‘ *Quare adhæsit pavimento*,’ with observations, duly calculated to induce him to think that it required great learning to explain the necessity of granting it to the judge, before whom he was to move. Boswell sent all round the town to attornies for books, that might enable him to distinguish himself,—but in vain. He moved however for the writ, making the best use he could of the observations in the brief. The judge was perfectly astonished, and the audience amazed.—The judge said, ‘ I never heard of such a writ—what can it be that adheres *pavimento* ?—Are any of you gentlemen at the bar able to explain this ?’ The Bar laughed. At last one of them said, ‘ My Lord, Mr. Boswell last night *adhæsit pavimento*. There was no moving him for some time. At last he was carried to bed, and he has been dreaming about himself and the pavement.’ ”—Vol. i., p. 130.

Another story, of which Boswell is the hero, does credit to the

smartness of the operator, although at the expense of our country and countrymen.

“ ‘Jemmy Boswell called upon me at my chambers in Lincoln’s Inn, desiring to know what would be my definition of *Taste*. I told him I must decline informing him how I should define it;—because I knew he would publish what I said would be my definition of it, and I did not choose to subject my notion of it to public criticism. He continued, however, his importunities in frequent calls, and, in one, complained much that I would not give him my definition of taste, as he had that morning got Henry Dundas’s (afterwards Lord Melville), Sir Archibald Macdonald’s, and John Anstruther’s, definitions of taste. ‘Well then,’ I said, ‘Boswell, we must have an end of this. Taste, according to my definition, is the judgment which Dundas, Macdonald, Anstruther, and you, manifested, when you determined to quit Scotland, and to come into the south. You may publish this if you please.’ ”  
—Vol. i., p. 303.

We have now seen Scott launched, at the age of thirty-two, on the sea of public life, and from this time forward the part he was destined to play was public, and is identified with the history of the time. His aptitude and qualification for these new scenes, and, in consequence, his general character, became now more clearly developed. We shall interrupt the thread of the narrative for a little, to endeavour to estimate his merits and failings as a public man. In this task we shall differ widely from his biographer. We concur indeed almost entirely with Mr. Twiss as to the many great attributes, which we admit him to have possessed. But we see him with other eyes—if Mr. Twiss has done justice to his own powers of vision. Taking the portrait of him given us, it seems to us, when attentively studied, to present a much more chequered surface, than that smooth unvarying colour of magnanimity and excellence, in which it appears to his admiring historian.

The features of his character, as a politician, on which his memory most safely rests, were sagacity and resolution—constant activity and energy, and untiring patience. These are very conspicuously displayed throughout his life, which, as we have already remarked, has raised his reputation as a practical man of affairs much higher than we had thought it stood. He also had the art—a rare one—of acquiring influence over weaker men. His secret was not that sort of fascination by which commanding spirits, like Napoleon, draw men after them—neither was it influence gained by debasing servility. It rather seems to have consisted in a certain practical adroitness, not remote from his professional qualities, united with a constant eye to the main object in which he was engaged. In this way, apart from some congeniality of taste and mind, which probably contributed not a little to that

result, he acquired a most remarkable ascendancy with George the III., and Queen Charlotte, and what was a greater triumph of his power, he continued to possess an influence, nearly equal, with George IV., with whom, while Prince of Wales, he had lived in open hostility. He was consistent. That praise cannot be denied him. The mob, at Oxford, cheered him justly, as having never rattled. Whatever may have been the nature or quality of his opinions, he maintained them most stoutly, and clung to them to the last. Nor are we inclined to doubt that they were conscientiously entertained by him—at least so far as he ever stopped to trace the process of reasoning by which he arrived at them. For in his mind they were not so much opinions as axioms, which commended themselves to his judgment without reasoning, and which therefore no reasoning could disturb. And when we say that he was most cautious, wise, and firm in council, as well as energetic in action, we think our catalogue of political virtues is nearly complete.

Whether he was as disinterested as consistent, or as scrupulous in the means he used to promote his opinions, as honest in holding them, admits of more legitimate doubt. It might be harsh to assert that with him, as Sydney Smith says, "God save the King," meant "God save my salary;" but it is very clear that the honours and emoluments of office were ever most prominent in his thoughts. It is plain that he dwells with great inward complacency on his accumulating wealth and dignity, and in spite of the incessant intimations of approaching resignation, he never seems to have forgotten the advice of the Principal of Brazenose, "*Cave de resignationibus.*" Although he often took leave, he was very loth to depart; and while, in 1820, for about the tenth time, he protests that sixty-nine is a preposterous age for a Chancellor, and that he must resign, 1826 finds him, at seventy-five, only yielding up the seals to the irresistible grasp of Canning.

It appears to us that all this arose from a certain fear of change, which, he was afraid, might endanger the fortune and fame which he had so unexpectedly achieved. He had made money, a name, and a family, and he was tremulously fearful that some flap of the fickle goddess's wings might rob him of them all. "*Resignoque dedit*" was a motto he was not fond of, and he had experience enough of "*proba pauperies*" not to seek her again. In short, it was a certain moral cowardice and prudence combined—a desire to make his harvest sure, without waiting for the uncertain ripening of later fruit, while the sky looked louring. This feeling is well exemplified in one of the last panics which he took, at the period of the Radical riots in 1819. Writing to Lord Stowell, after stating in a former letter that sixty-nine and the

Chancellorship were quite incompatible, he remarks, "Lord Clarendon, I think, speaks of Lord Keeper Coventry as fortunate in not living to see the civil broils of his country. I am excessively fearful that no man can now hold the Great Seal for any material portion of time, and live without seeing what Coventry did not see." It is not very plain why it was necessary to hold the Great Seal, in order to live to see all this; but the meaning or impression is obviously that the Chancellor suspected that the holder of the Great Seal might possibly live to find his head off his shoulders, or his estates made public property, and that under such circumstances sixty-nine was a retreat from which he might survey the storm in safety, without the imputation of cowardice. But the storm passed by, and the infirmities of sixty-nine vanished with it.

Neither did he ever hesitate about the means he used for obtaining those ends on which he mentally determined. Not that we mean to say his means were underhand and tortuous. That was not his nature. But in the use of such means as his nature did prompt, he was singularly unscrupulous, and we are much mistaken, if a fairer exhibition of his private correspondence would not have shown this still more clearly. This quality of his mind appears in almost every remarkable act of his life; the Treason and Sedition Bills, his conduct as Chancellor in 1804, during George III.'s illness, and his ultimate behaviour to Queen Caroline, may be mentioned as instances.

But the one grand and essential defect in the character of his hero, Mr. Twiss is apparently resolved not to see; although, in the course of the work, there are faint glimpses, now and then, through "chinks that time has made," of a greater degree of light than he will admit himself to possess. That a man so gifted by nature, not merely to shine, but to act; with powers so practical, and grasp so great, should have passed through a career of such unbroken prosperity and influence, without doing one good deed for his country—without stamping his name on one single measure of improvement, or one generous effort to ameliorate the condition of his fellow-citizens, leaves on our mind a sense of sickening humiliation, which utterly absorbs any interest or respect the individual might otherwise excite. Yet so it is. In these three volumes there is not one example of any spontaneous effort to do good. On the contrary, there is not a measure of humanity, or liberality, which did not find in him an active and acrimonious opponent—whether the reform was in representation, in toleration, or in jurisprudence, it was equally sure to meet with unreserved resistance. The history of his political life is one of perpetual endeavours to restrict and abridge the existing liberties of the people, and to prevent all efforts for their extension.



His legislation was all directed to breaking down the sacred barriers of the constitution—his deliberation to continuing all its obsolete and unjust distinctions. Wilberforce, in the cause of humanity, Romilly, in the amendment of the law, and Pitt himself, in his half-hearted efforts for religious liberty, found him their constant antagonist. As far as we recollect, the only instance in which he is found supporting a measure of reform, is in that of Lord Erskine's Bill for preventing cruelty to animals, for he seems to have had a feeling for the brute creation as a class, which he never extended to the great mass of his countrymen.

Not, indeed, that he was naturally of a harsh or an unkindly nature. In private he was much the reverse; and many of his letters, and of the anecdotes concerning him, show him capable both of gentle and generous feeling. But he was utterly destitute of enlarged views or principles of public policy. His mind was by nature narrow and bigoted. Reared originally in the monkish retreats of Oxford, his education strengthened the natural temper of his thoughts. He seems to have had but one notion in politics—that, whatever was, was right; and as long as that existing state of things brought him a comfortable salary and public honours, he marvelled how any one could live discontentedly under so benign a constitution. The loadstar of his compass was the monarch; the repellent force the people. To serve, to please, to satisfy the first, was the object of his life; the last he never seems to have regarded in any other light than as a many-headed monster, which would fain make a meal of the Great Seal, if any license were allowed it. It was not aristocratic scorn, or the efforts of a parvenu adventurer, to forget his origin. He did not begin to think, like Lord Foppington in the play, that “when he was a commoner he was a very nauseous fellow.” He regarded everything having the semblance of popularity, with pure and loyal terror and dislike, and considered all efforts at change as an insidious design to let loose those whom it was the object of all government to restrain. “The divinity that doth hedge a king” was so august in his eyes, that he gravely speaks of his half-mad, though still *royal* master in 1807, as having “more sense and understanding than all his ministers put together;” and to judge by his letters to him, one would think that the highest duty and felicity on earth was to keep the king comfortable.

The character of his political reasonings was precisely such as was suited to carry out the views and measures he supported. They were never founded on enlarged principle, but were always *indirect*, tending to show, not that what was defended was right, or what was proposed wrong in principle, but that some indirect consequence might follow from the proposed improvement, or

that some consequential benefit might arise from the abuse complained of. Such is his argument in defence of the seizure and detention of the Danish ships in 1801—one of the most unjustifiable pieces of tyranny that ever was exercised by a strong over a weaker power; and, above all, in his vindication of the slave trade, in support of which, with his usual consistency and determination, he struggled to the very last. The plain question of right or wrong he never meets directly; and in all his speeches in Parliament, we do not believe there is one in which a single sound rule or canon in political science is to be found enunciated.

One other ruling object he had;—to *be* in, and to *stay* in. He had no desire to do so at the expense either of personal consistency or party connexion, for to both he was faithful in a very high degree. But we cannot read the book without perceiving that the power and circumstance of office was the great aim and enjoyment of his life. Even from the extracts of the correspondence given, this is plainly discernible, although certainly it is wonderful how the wary politician suited his letters to the party addressed. Sometimes, to his old master, or his country friends, he will dilate on the vanity of all earthly ambition; but his heart was plainly all the time in the perplexed movements of the Cabinet, and the tides of Royal inclinations. When he left office in 1806, or rather on resuming it in 1807, he seems to have inscribed in his judicial note-book a fragment from one of Seneca's tragedies, commencing

“ *Me dulcis detinet quies  
Obscuro positus loco  
Leni perfruar otio.  
Nullis nota Quiritibus  
Aetas per tacitum fluat.*”

And in like manner, he writes to his friend, Dr. Ridley:—“I have become inured to, and fond of retirement. My mind had been busied in the contemplation of my best interests—those which are connected with nothing here.” But in a letter to his brother dated the same day, he is full of the feverish excitement of his return to power, and anxious speculation as to its probable endurance; and from a subsequent letter in October 1807, to a young student of law, it appears that the man who had thrown ambition behind him, and only sought out a retreat where his years might flow noiselessly by, had amused his rustic hours by reading over “Coke upon Littleton!”

“ *Haec ubi locutus fenerator Alfius  
Jani jam futurus rusticus,  
Omnem redegit Idibus pecuniam;  
Quaerit Kalendis ponere.*”

The true nature of his feelings is perhaps more accurately expressed in his advice to the landlord of the inn at Rusheyford, when he was more than an octogenarian—

“ I hear, Mr. Hoult, you are talking of retiring from business, but let me advise you not to do so. Busy people are very apt to think a life of leisure is a life of happiness; but believe me, for I speak from experience, when a man who has been much occupied through life arrives at having nothing to do, *he is very apt not to know what to do with himself.*”—Vol. iii., p. 246.

We have given this short outline of the unfavourable features of Lord Eldon's political character from no want of appreciation of his sterling qualities, or any party wish to decry them. But we have been prompted to dwell more strongly on the views we have expressed, from the constant and intolerable strain of praise in which his biographer indulges, and the utter omission of all notice of defects, which strike the most unbiassed reader, on the face of his very artfully contrived narrative. We fairly own, that our confidence is entirely shaken in the impartiality of the selections he gives us from the correspondence—and we cannot but conclude, from the manifest spirit of the work, that much remains behind which would throw more light on the true character of the subject of his narrative. We now resume our analysis, and shall try by a detailed consideration of some of the more important events of his life, to illustrate the justice of these remarks.

When Lord Eldon entered the House of Commons in 1783, the excitement of the Coalition question and the India Bills was at its height. He took part with Mr. Pitt in that controversy, and continued through life true to the party with whom his political life commenced. There is no doubt that his Oxford education had a strong tendency to form an arbitrary and illiberal system of political thought: but the probability is, that the immediate influence which operated in determining his choice of a party, was the strong friendship which Lord Thurlow had conceived for him, and the very material services which he had rendered him in his profession. At the same time, Pitt was the *King's* Minister. The Coalition lost their offices, under circumstances of considerable personal offence, because individually they were obnoxious to the King—and Lord Eldon's future history proves how deep a sympathy he must have had with a Cabinet constructed on such a principle.

We shall not be seduced by any thing in the work before us, into a discussion on the fruitful subjects of controversy by which the country was then disturbed. They are treated fairly enough by Mr. Twiss, considering his own party predilections. Scott did not engage in the discussions prior to the dissolution—and in the

succeeding Parliament he distinguished himself honourably by speaking and voting with Fox, and against his own friends, on a question of law involved in the Westminster scrutiny: a service which Fox remembered ever afterwards. He is unquestionably entitled to full credit for the manliness and independence of his conduct on this occasion. He was a young Member—the Opposition were feeble in numbers, and unpopular in the country, and party spirit ran in a deeper flood than had been known since the latter days of Walpole. But he maintained the point for which Fox contended, with all the pertinacity of a lawyer for the integrity of his peculiar system: and it must be admitted, that in this early essay in public life, self-interest had little share.

The anecdote book relates the following incident in the debates on the India Bill, which we recollect to have read elsewhere, but which is a very good example of Sheridan's ready wit:—

“During the debates on the India Bill, at which period John Robinson was secretary to the Treasury, Sheridan, on one evening when Fox's majorities were decreasing, said, ‘Mr. Speaker, this is not at all to be wondered at, when a member is employed to corrupt every body in order to obtain votes.’ Upon this there was a great outcry made by almost every body in the House. ‘Who is it? Name him! name him!’ ‘Sir,’ said Sheridan to the Speaker, ‘I shall not name the person. It is an unpleasant and invidious thing to do so, and therefore I shall not name him. But don't suppose, Sir, that I abstain because there is any difficulty in naming him; I could do that, Sir, as soon as you could say *Jack Robinson*.’”—Vol. i., p. 161.

Scott's reputation had risen so high as a lawyer, that in 1788 he was appointed Solicitor-General, and he took a prominent part in the Regency debates of the following year. The hair-splitting and nice distinctions of the discussions which then arose were congenial to the metaphysical and discriminating cast of his mind: and although he never was a good parliamentary debater, and the only occasion on which he was known to break out in declamation, was singularly unfortunate, (see p. 1, vol. i.), in this instance he afforded the Minister much real assistance, and laid the foundation of the remarkable good-will which George III. conceived for him. But we pass over these matters, to come to a period of his life at which he may most justly be regarded as standing at the bar of posterity, for a series of acts, on which, if not clearly justified by the circumstances of the times, no sentence too severe could be passed on a public man.

By the promotion of Sir A. Macdonald to the Bench, a vacancy was created in the office of Attorney-General in 1793, to which Mr. Scott succeeded; and he had accordingly thrown on him the whole weight and responsibility of the State Trials which

have so unhappily given a character to the succeeding year. His biographer is right in the anxiety he displays to defend his reputation in this important crisis of his life. As a political man, it was on this stage that he played his most important part. Possibly in cabinet intrigues, he may in after years have silently affected interests as deep. But on this occasion he came forward as the public and responsible author and adviser of proceedings of the deepest interest to the liberties and privileges of this free people. He acquitted himself, as indeed he always did, with ability and with moderation of manner. But in any estimate of Lord Eldon's character, it is necessary to go a little farther, and to consider the essential merits of proceedings, which, for good or evil, stand out so prominently, in the history of English jurisprudence.

We think Mr. Twiss's treatment of this subject one of the worst and least creditable parts of his performance. We have already adverted, and not, we are sure, too severely, to the injury he has done his work, by the avowed party character in which he writes it. Still he professes to write as an historian—although allowing his cast of sentiment to borrow a colour from the complexion of his political thoughts. We should therefore have expected, that on a matter of history so public and so important in the annals of our country, we should have met with something very different from a party argument against the verdicts of the juries in these far-famed prosecutions. Indeed, while we most willingly admit the great pleasure with which we read the work before us, and would do justice to the tone of liberality in which the author generally speaks of individuals distinguished by opposite political sentiments, we cannot disguise our surprise and deep regret at the manner in which an Englishman and a constitutional lawyer has in the present day ventured to treat this subject.

It is too much perhaps to expect that Mr. Twiss, or those who think with him in politics, should consider, as we do, these treason trials as a most unhallowed sacrifice offered up to the frenzy of a public panic; or look upon them as a singular and humiliating example of how frail the tenure is by which our boasted liberty is held, or how liable it is to be thrown beneath the feet of our legislators in the paroxysms of cowardice, or by the schemes of treachery. But we did expect that Mr. Twiss, writing at the distance of fifty years, after all the excitement of the time has long passed away, if he did not, which he certainly cannot be compelled to do, open his mind to receive lights which succeeding years afford, would at least have done his duty faithfully as an historian, and not have presented us with the piece of special pleading, which he introduces under

the title of "some outline of the main questions of fact and law which were raised at the trial."

It cannot be disputed that at the period in question, a very violent and seditious spirit had made some little progress in different parts of the country, and the foolish imitation of the phrases and style of the French revolutionary leaders made the extent of this feeling appear greater than it was in reality. We are certainly not at all inclined to say that a provident government would not have acted wisely in taking prompt and effective measures to counteract the designs of the guilty parties, and to punish their overt acts. At the same time we may differ very much from the statesmen of those times, as to the most salutary and effectual way of checking the spirit of disaffection under such circumstances. It is a rule almost universal, and holds true exactly in proportion to the general liberty of the constitution under which it arises, that such states of public mind as that which was supposed to threaten the safety of the country in 1794, never exist without some corresponding defect or vice in the state of the constitution itself. Though it is a lesson which governments are slow to learn, the principle to be deduced from this proposition is equally certain, that the surest and only certain way to cure sedition in a free country, is the reform of abuses, and the equal and fair administration of the law. The outward sore does infallibly indicate an inward disease, and vain are all violent applications outwardly, if the constitution is not purified. It is not by the gibbet or the axe, the terrors of state prosecutions, or the proclamation of martial law—it is not by throwing aside the legal safeguards which protect thousands in order that one guilty man may not escape, that a great nation can secure itself from internal dangers. This indeed is to promote the evil, not to remedy it, for the unjust discontent which you seek to punish in a few, becomes thereby just indignation in the minds of the many. It would be well that rulers would bear in mind the words of the preamble to that statute, which was the cause of so much discussion in the times of which we write, "that the state of a king standeth and consisteth more assured by the love and favour of the subjects towards the sovereign, than in the dread and fears of laws made with rigorous and severe punishment:"\*—and that to preserve that love and favour, either to a monarch or a constitution, it is only necessary in a well regulated state, to rule with equal justice, and to apply timely reformation.

When we look back to the supposed dangers, and the too certain remedies of these times, it is impossible not to feel how little the latter partake of the true spirit of government. On the one

\* 25 Edward III., stat. 5, c. 2.

hand we have all the violent expedients to which feebleness always flies in great emergencies—the *habeas corpus* Act suspended—the freedom of public speech prohibited—the right of petitioning Parliament restricted and abridged—remedies, alas! which left their deadly poison behind them, long after they themselves had been erased from the statute book. But for what was all this endured?—Ostensibly, to put down an imagined conspiracy against the King and the constitution, but truly, in a great degree, to prevent and extinguish agitation for that reasonable reform in our representative system, which length of time, and change of circumstances had rendered right, and which, with the full assent of the community, was carried into effect forty years afterwards, after the plentiful crop of disaffection and discontent had been reaped.

It is impossible to read the trial of Hardy without being satisfied that while there was a certain desire to impress the public with the belief of a conspiracy to introduce French principles—a term conveniently obscure; and among a great deal that was reprehensible, and perhaps inflammatory and seditious, one principal overt act of which he was accused, and almost the only overt act which was proved against him, was the design to effect a Reform in Parliament. This indeed is made clear beyond question by the garbled quotations, and emphatic italics of the biographer. We are not sure that Mr. Twiss does not consider the Reform Bill itself as treason, or at least revolutionary and Jacobin, if we are to judge of his real sentiments by the ridiculous and obsolete tone of his observations on it. But a few extracts from his quotations from the evidence will show wherein he thought the strength of the charge against Hardy lay. For instance, he seems to consider it as tending to treason to hold that “a republican—is one who wishes to promote the general welfare of the people,” (p. 244)—that “sovereignty as a matter of right, appertains to the nation only, and not to any individual”—(a sentence of Tom Paine’s, which Mr. Twiss prints in italics, but which seems to us the soundest and most elementary principle of government)—that “every citizen is a member of the sovereignty, and as such can acknowledge no personal subjection, *and his obedience can only be to the laws.*” We should like to hear any different doctrine ventilated at the present day, either on the hustings or in the House. Then the following paragraph is given; the italics are the biographer’s:—

“On the 20th of January 1794, a general meeting of the London Corresponding Society agreed upon an address to the people, and upon certain resolutions. Both the address and the resolutions were printed by Hardy’s order. The concluding paragraph of the address ran thus:—‘You may ask perhaps by what means shall we seek re-

dress? We answer, that men in a state of civilized society are bound to seek redress of their grievances from the laws, *as long as any redress can be obtained by the laws.* But our common master, whom we serve, whose law is a law of liberty, and whose service is perfect freedom, has taught us not to expect to gather grapes from thorns, nor figs from thistles. *We must have redress from our own laws, and not from the laws of our plunderers, enemies, and oppressors.* There is no redress for a nation, circumstanced as we are, but in a fair, free, and full representation of the people.'—Vol. i., p. 254.

In other words, we must have redress from a Reformed House of Commons, and not from one which does not represent the people.

These are merely examples, both of the substance of the prosecutions, and of the spirit in which Mr. Twiss has thought fit to deal with them. Let any man compare the passages we have quoted—we do not say with the speeches at Birmingham, or in the King's Park at Edinburgh,—but with the principles constantly enunciated in the debates in Parliament on the Reform Bill, and reflect that the former were made the ground-work of a CAPITAL CHARGE against a man who *was not the author*, but was merely supposed to be a favourer of the sentiments expressed, and he will then have a just criterion of the character of the proceedings.

The extracts given by Mr. Twiss are most unfairly made. He gives the reader all that bear against, and none that bear for the prisoner; he actually never once hints that the witnesses who spoke to the more violent of the expressions he takes notice of, were Government *spies*, for whose evidence the Attorney-General himself was obliged to apologize to the Jury, and whose character and credit were so utterly extinguished on cross-examination as entirely to neutralize their testimony. And, on the whole, his clear design and aim is that the uninstructed reader should conclude that the prisoner was acquitted in some inexplicable turmoil of popular feeling, contrary to the clear and undoubted evidence in the case.

We are confident that there are very few men indeed in this country who, on reading over Hardy's trial at the present day, could honestly say that the verdict was anything but the clearest and most transparent deduction from the evidence, or that the execution of Hardy, on such evidence, would have been anything but a murder under colour of justice. The man was on his trial for TREASON, and any one who will take the trouble to read the jumbled extracts in Mr. Twiss's chapter will have a favourable specimen of the strange materials out of which this charge—the highest and most fearful state crime—was sought to be constructed. If Hardy had been convicted, no man's life was safe for an hour; for no one could have told whether the treason consisted in praising



Paine, or the French Revolution, or in wishing for reform in Parliament, or in ordering the band to play the Marseillaise Hymn, or in not answering the questions of the Norwich Society, or for belonging to a Society to which a man belonged who was suspected of writing a play called "George's head in a basket," or any other of the hundred and one circumstances of a similar nature, on which, taken together, the verdict of the Jury was demanded.

We are so far from sympathizing in any degree with the tone with which Mr. Twiss treats this subject, that we cannot look back without trembling to the consequences from which the courage of a British advocate, and the honesty of a British jury, saved our country. The nobleness of the defence—the integrity of the verdict—the triumph of the law and the liberty of the subject—have no charms for our author. But to us they constitute a bright green spot on which the eye of the patriot may rest, in one of the darkest and most dreary periods of our constitutional history. These were days, when every man's feet were beset with snares, and in which, at his own table, or by his own fireside, he was not safe from the designs of traitors—when every unguarded word which he spoke in the openness of his heart, and the confidence of domestic retirement, was caught up and recorded by a spy:—days in which, to speak the name of Liberty, rendered the speaker suspected, and when every free aspiration was checked and stifled, to satisfy an inordinate and tyrannical spirit of fear. It has been said, and very generally believed, that if Hardy and his confederates had been convicted, many hundred warrants were in readiness to be issued. Well they might be; for if many of the matters of which Hardy was accused, and which were chiefly insisted on, were treasonable, the traitors were numberless. Let us hope that these days of terror are departed, never to return; and that, if our author ever rises, as perhaps he may, to fill the same post as Scott then occupied, he may find, that doctrines which may appropriately become the biographer of Eldon, would never now be tolerated in an English Attorney-General.

But there is a defence given for the Attorney-General's conduct in this matter, which he himself advanced in the House of Commons, and which he appears to have inserted in his anecdote book, deserving some consideration. It is in substance this, that he had doubts whether the crime amounted to treason; but that if he had tried the parties for sedition, he could not have brought in all the evidence which he wished to lay before the country; and that therefore, to rouse the country to a sense of their danger, he preferred trying for the capital crime, even although he ran the risk of an acquittal. He expressed it thus—

"It appeared to me to be more essential to securing the public safety, that the whole of their transactions should be published, than that any of these individuals should be convicted."—P. 284.

In the same way, he said in the House of Commons—

"Though a traitorous conspiracy was not proved at those trials, a design to traduce and subvert the constitution and good of the country was made manifest, by meetings which had never before existed, and by the publication of libels to which this country had been a stranger."\*

Now, how far this was a cause invented after the event, we cannot precisely determine. We have little doubt, that the trials *were* intended to support that fabric of alarm on which the minister depended, and from which have flowed so many calamities. But from an officer in the position of the Attorney-General, we cannot accept any such ground of expediency as an excuse for his proceedings. It was his own principle, that the Attorney-General was bound to act independently of the Cabinet, and Fox laid it down, apparently with his concurrence, that whenever it was the opinion of the Attorney-General, that persons had been guilty of high treason, it was his bounden duty to prosecute. If, then, the Attorney-General was satisfied, that the acts charged amounted to treason, he had no alternative. But the serious part of this matter is, that it is plain HE DID NOT THINK IT TREASON. He nowhere says that he thought it so. He did not say so in the House, neither does he say so in the somewhat querulous defence of himself in the anecdote book. On the contrary, *he* says, that *although* a traitorous conspiracy was *not proved*, a design to traduce the constitution *was* proved; and that he preferred trying the parties for treason, not because he thought them guilty of treason, but because, by so trying them, he was enabled to disclose certain facts to the country. But what is this but acknowledging, that he was playing a most unauthorized game with the lives of the accused? Can any thing be conceived more revolting, than that the Attorney of England should confess, that he tried a man for his life, when he believed him not guilty of a capital crime; and that he ran the fearful risk, of having that declared treason, which he believed not to be treason, and the life of a fellow subject unjustly sacrificed, merely from a motive of state policy? If this were true, Machiavelli himself never taught any thing more abominable. But, in truth, we do not believe it. We believe it an excuse invented after the fact, to give the impression, that the conviction so eagerly desired, never was expected; but that instead of the mortification of defeat,

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\* Cobbett's Parl. Hist., vol. xxxii., p. 485.

which is transparent, the author of the prosecutions was indulging the complacency of success in his main design. Whatever the truth may be, in either light the proceedings prove how little regard Scott really had for the liberties or privileges of British subjects, when brought into competition with any object he wished to accomplish.

Fortunately for our Constitution, the tide of arbitrary principle which had set in so strongly, was stemmed in England in the ordinary course of judicial procedure: and amid the insanity of the times, which prompted even a man like Wyndham to talk of exercising "a vigour beyond the law," an English Jury were found incapable of sacrificing the freedom of their countrymen.

Such were these celebrated trials. Perhaps the contemporary proceedings that brought down so much reproach on our criminal system in Scotland, were in some degree compensated to this country, by the firm and stable basis on which trial by jury was established by the English verdicts. Long may it remain the honour and the protection—*decus et tutamen*—of our constitutional freedom—and long may it be before it is degraded into a "*delusion, a mockery, and a snare.*" We will do Scott the justice to believe, that however anxious for a conviction, he was incapable of permitting the prisoners to be tried by a Jury packed for conviction, or sentence to be carried into execution on a verdict so obtained, pending the discussion of its legality.

The trials having failed, a timely incident was laid hold of as the occasion of the introduction of restrictive laws. The tide of popular feeling was beginning to turn against the French war, and distress and starvation oppressed the people. The King, on going to open Parliament, was assailed not only by strong marks of disapprobation from the crowd, but also by various missiles. Mr. Pitt, accordingly, came down to the House, and because some stones had been thrown at the monarch, proposed a bill by which the assembling of more than fifty persons under pretence of petitioning Parliament, was declared to be seditious, and the meeting was made liable to be dispersed by any magistrate. A more direct inroad on the elementary principles of British liberty cannot be conceived, and the pretext was absurdly inadequate to the measure built upon it. We can best illustrate the proceeding by a modern example. In the end of 1830, King William was openly insulted in the streets of London, and, as is well known, was obliged to decline going to dine with the city. What would the country have said if, as a cure for the nation's discontent, Earl Grey, instead of coming to Parliament with a Reform Bill, had proposed to declare all meetings to petition Parliament seditious? Yet to such a degree had the diatribes of Burke, and the fear of revolutionary principles possessed both Parliament and

the country, that not all the earnest denunciations of Fox, nor the manifest and plain abandonment of liberty, could rouse any spirit of independence within the walls of St. Stephen's. The fertile mind of the Attorney-General was set to work to invent new measures of restriction, and the House found no more difficulty in passing, than he did in preparing them.

We cannot, however, pursue this theme farther, and we willingly turn from this dark chapter of our history, to follow Lord Eldon's fortunes farther. We cannot afford space to trace, as they deserve, the effect of the events of that calamitous period on the subsequent liberties and fortunes of the country. We have dwelt at a little length upon them, because Scott judged rightly when he told the jury, in Hardy's case, that his name would go down to posterity in connexion with these trials. The responsibility which pressed upon him he could not avoid, from the position which he held when the startling events of the time occurred: and no candid man, in his estimate of his conduct, will fail to take into account the many and bewildering difficulties by which he was surrounded. But, as we said in the outset, he stands at the bar of posterity on trial, for his character as a great public man: and when merit, and not excuse is claimed for him, we must give our verdict accordingly. And therefore we say, that he lent his aid, as far as it could go, to destroy the liberties of England; that he did so honestly and heartily, because he had no true appreciation of free principles of government; and that if at this hour, we enjoy freedom of speech and of action, we owe it to the failure of his efforts, or to the noble resistance which was made to them. In taking our leave of the subject, we shall only observe, that the proceedings were as creditable in manner, to the ability, manliness, and moderation of the Attorney-General, as in substance they were the reverse. He never forgot the dignity of his office, or the courteous demeanour which at the Bar or on the Bench, always distinguished him.

The year 1799 saw him quit the bar and the House of Commons as Chief-Justice of the Common Pleas, and elevated to the peerage by the title of Baron Eldon. We are rather disappointed that Mr. Twiss, himself a lawyer, has not given us a better estimate of his powers as a pleader. He rather chooses to dwell on his successes on circuit, in confounding witnesses, and beguiling simple juries, in which, as we have already remarked, Scott's excellence could not lie, because he was a confused unimaginative speaker, with no fancy whatever, and hardly any power of rhetoric. But to the Bench, on legal questions, he must have been a reasoner of the deepest power. The singularly clear and lucid flow of his thoughts, his quick apprehension of distinctions the most subtle, and, at the same time, his firm and masterly grasp

of the strong points of his subject, must have rendered him an instructive model of legal reasoning; and we regret the more that Mr. Twiss should not have elaborated this part of the subject, that to us, in this quarter of the island, the distinctive excellences of the advocate have been thrown into the shade by the characteristics and peculiarities of the judge.

As a Parliamentary debater he cannot be said to have held any rank; because he never, or hardly ever, interfered in any but questions in his own peculiar province. His complete mastery over that, and his thorough discretion, made him a useful auxiliary to Pitt; but he was without pretensions to oratory; and amid the blaze of light that then shone in the House of Commons, he was certainly among the lesser fires.

His tenure of the Chief-Justiceship seems to have been always regarded by himself as the happiest period of his life. Although short, it established his judicial reputation on perhaps a footing even higher than that which he attained afterwards as Chancellor. Mr. Twiss make the following remarks on this subject:—

“The days of his Chief Justiceship, though they lasted only from July 1799 to April 1801, contributed greatly to his fame. On the Bench of a Common Law Court, no scope was allowed to his only judicial imperfection, the tendency to hesitate. A Common Law Judge, when he has to try causes at *Nisi Prius*, or indictments in a Crown Court, must sum up and state his opinion to the Jury on the instant; and when he sits in Bank with his brethren to decide questions of law, must keep pace with them in coming to his conclusions. Thus compelled to decide without postponement, Lord Eldon at once established the highest judicial reputation; a reputation, indeed, which afterwards wrought somewhat disadvantageously against himself when Lord Chancellor, by showing how little ground there was for his diffidence, and consequently how little necessity for his doubts and delays.”—Vol. i., p. 340.

It was impossible that when the poor Oxford student, who had been driven to the law by sheer necessity, found himself thus introduced, on equal terms, among the proud aristocracy of England, he should not have felt great satisfaction and considerable complacency in the event. To do him justice, he was above any little flutter of vanity. He was evidently impressed and agitated; and although the letters which he wrote on the occasion, in particular that to his mother, who was still alive, breathe too much self-righteousness, and attribute his success to “his life spent in conformity with the principles of virtue,” there is a subdued seriousness in the cast of his thoughts, and a strong appreciation of the responsibilities he was about to undertake, which recall the interest we felt in him, while struggling with adversity.

Lady Eldon’s pride on the occasion was embittered by one circumstance. She could not bear the wig:—

“ ‘ In compliance with Lady Eldon’s feeling,’ says the present Earl, ‘ Lord Eldon applied, as he has told me often, to King George III. to allow him to dispense with his wig, at times when he was not engaged in performing official functions. He pressed on the King the fact, that in former days, under the reigns of some of his Majesty’s predecessors (referring, I think, particularly to James I. and Charles I.) wigs were not worn by the Judges. ‘ True,’ replied the King good humouredly, ‘ I admit the correctness of your statement, and am willing, if you like it, that you should do as they did : for though they certainly had no wigs, yet they wore their beards.’ ”—Vol. i., pp. 339-340.

His tenure of the Chief-Justiceship was of short duration. In 1801, Lord Loughborough resigned the seals, on the retirement of Mr. Pitt from the Treasury, and Lord Eldon succeeded him as Chancellor, and entered on that career which has chiefly made his name famous.

Our limits will not allow us to follow Mr. Twiss as closely as we have done hitherto through the remaining part of Lord Eldon’s career; nor, indeed, is this at all necessary, as the subsequent events in his history are matters of public notoriety. We shall content ourselves, therefore, with taking notice concisely of some of its more prominent features.

Lord Eldon received the Great Seal for the first time in 1801. He resigned it on Mr. Pitt’s death in 1806. He again received it on the dismissal of the Grenville Ministry in 1807, and held it until the breaking up of the Liverpool Administration in 1826—having held it in all 24 years, 10 months, and 23 days, the longest period it ever was held by any individual since the Norman Conquest.

As of course he became as Chancellor, a member of the cabinet, his character as a minister forms the most important element in his subsequent career. Although Mr. Twiss tells us in high-flown phrase, that Lord Eldon’s mind was one of those “ to which, in times of doubt and danger, the minds of men make fast as to a mooring,” and although he himself said, not with too much modesty, that in public life he had either been “ always right or always wrong,” he really had no pretension to be called a statesman at all. He had but one rule for every thing, as we have before observed in speaking of the character of his mind ;—and the history of his public administration is told when we say that he made his first speech in the House of Lords in favour of suspending the *Habeas Corpus* Act, and his last as a minister, in opposing the Catholic claims. We think it is Pitt who is represented in one of the political eclogues, as exclaiming

“ I lately thought, forgive the rash mistake,  
That kings should govern for their peoples’ sake.”

But Lord Eldon never seems to have been guilty of similar temerity. He spent his life in opposing every measure tending to increase the power of the people, or indeed to change even their social condition for the better : while, on the other hand, every proposal by which the power of the prerogative or the executive might be increased, met with his hearty approval. Therefore, while such measures as the Six Acts were warmly supported by him, he was the uniform and unrelenting opponent of Catholic Emancipation, Parliamentary Reform, Slave Abolition, Free Trade, Toleration of all kinds, Popular Education, and indeed of every one of those measures of public benefit which the last fifteen years have happily rendered law. He hated change for its own sake. The disappearance of hoops from the drawing-room filled him with alarm. Even in the law, he could not bear that the uncouth ancient land-marks should be altered in the slightest degree. A remarkable instance of this, as it occurs to us, is to be found in his opposition to the "Debtors' Freehold Estate Bill."

"The Chancellor," says Mr. Twiss, "on the 18th of July, opposed also a bill, sent up from the Commons, for rendering the freehold estates, of persons dying indebted, liable to their simple contract debts.

"It was always (said he) in the creditor's power to stipulate for a bond, and then he would have his remedy against the land of the debtor. This bill, while it went to remove the guards with which the policy of the law had fenced landed property, afforded in fact but little benefit to the creditor; and it was better that he should be left to use his own caution and discretion, than that he should sit down in apathy, under the notion that the legislature would take care of his interests."—Vol. ii., p. 256.

To our Scotch ears, it does indeed sound marvellous in the extreme, that the highest legal authority should gravely maintain that a debtor's property should not be liable for his debts, and that the law should not protect a creditor for fear of making him careless. The details of the Bill might, of course, be open to exception, but the justice of its principle, and the futility of the Chancellor's grounds of opposition seem manifest. It is a remarkable illustration of the tenacity with which his mind clung to things as they were.

Catholic Emancipation was the chief public question on which his interest and energies were exerted. He seemed to regard these disabilities as a sort of sacred fire which it was his duty to keep burning, and to which the element of the coronation oath added additional sanctity. It was the question on which he took office, and on which he left it, and it possessed all the elements of deep sympathy for all the natural predilections of his mind;—religious exclusion commended itself to the bigotry of his disposition—the popular cast both of the Catholics themselves,

and of the measures for their relief, jarred with the arbitrary tenets of his creed—and the resistance of the monarch roused all the narrow loyalty of his nature. It was the palladium of *his* British constitution, and we can conceive the old man, when he retired from the House of Lords in 1829, regarding the past with something of the feelings of Anchises, when he looked back on the flames of Troy, consuming his altars and his household gods, all that he had worshipped and venerated through life.

“ Abnegat, inceptoque et sedibus hæret in isdem.”

Pitt's retirement on this question in 1801, was not conducted with that openness and straightforwardness which became his character. Whether he made the Catholic claims a stalking-horse, to escape from the net of European politics, through which he could not thread the nation, or whether he was honestly satisfied of the necessity of the measure, no one can tell. It is certain he returned to office in 1805, without any satisfaction on the cardinal point which had caused his resignation. But having once resolved to quit the Government on this question, he ought to have given the country the benefit of those views which he thought so essential, and the King's opposition to which had deprived the nation of his services. Since the recall of Lord Fitzwilliam from that country—recalled because he almost pledged the Government to remove the disabilities—the state of Ireland had been most disastrous. Her statesmen and patriots had set their hearts on fair and equal rights with their Protestant brethren, in representation and legislation. If Pitt had fairly thrown his weight into the scale, and had joined Fox in a serious and honest effort, the thing must have been done. Instead of this, all that the country knew, was the simple fact of his resignation. Why he could not propose his intended measure, what it was, or what difficulties intervened, he would not inform the House of Commons; and thereby insured the delay of the all-important measure, and the excitement and agitation of Ireland, for a period of thirty years. The correspondence which was published by Lord Kenyon in 1827, shows, what was quite well known, that the King's scruples were the immediate cause of his retirement; but he would have deserved more credit, had he vigorously insisted out of office for the measure, which, as minister, he thought himself so deeply bound to carry.

Mr. Twiss, professing himself a friend to Catholic Emancipation, enters into a disquisition as to whether it has produced the effects expected from it, into which we shall certainly not follow him. Any man who thought that the measure wrested by O'Connell from the Duke of Wellington in 1829, would calm the troubles of that long agitated country, as well as if it had



been granted at the Union, has little pretensions to knowledge of mankind, or of nations. There is, however, one result in the progress of events, which probably Lord Eldon expected least. While trembling for Protestant ascendancy, among the shouts of the applauding under-graduates in 1829, in the Theatre at Oxford, he little thought, that in those orthodox bowers, where he first imbibed his anti-catholic tenets, Catholicism and Romanism were destined, at no distant date, to find their most welcome resting-place.

Connected with this subject, are some very curious revelations, regarding the part which George IV. bore in passing the Catholic Relief Bill. It would seem as if a superstitious terror had seized him in his old age; and that he whom vows had never bound, began to doubt whether he was safe in conscience in granting the Catholics that relief which the two Houses of Parliament had conceded. In March 1829, he sent for Lord Eldon, and had two interviews with him, of the tenor of which Lord Eldon preserved a memorandum. The last of these visits is said to have ended thus—

“ ‘Little more passed—except occasional bursts of expression,— ‘What can I do? What can I now fall back upon? What can I fall back upon? I am miserable, wretched, my situation is dreadful; nobody about me, to advise with. If I do give my assent, I’ll go to the baths abroad, and from thence to Hanover: I’ll return no more to England—I’ll make no Roman Catholic Peers—I will not do what this bill will enable me to do—I’ll return no more—let them get a Catholic King in Clarence.’ I think he also mentioned Sussex. ‘The people will see that I did not wish this.’

“ ‘There were the strongest appearances certainly of misery. He, more than once, stopped my leaving him. When the time came that I was to go, he threw his arms round my neck and expressed great misery. I left him about twenty minutes or a quarter before five.’”—Vol. iii., p. 86, 87.

Whether there was as much sincerity as stage effect in all this, may be judged of from the next letter—

“ ‘The fatal Bills received the Royal assent yesterday afternoon. After all I had heard in my visits, not a day’s delay! God bless us, and His Church!’”—Vol. iii., p. 87.

We suspect his Majesty played upon the ex-chancellor’s weakest point.

We have already remarked on Lord Eldon’s arguments against the Abolition of the Slave Trade, as furnishing a striking example of the indirect mode of reasoning which characterized all his political speeches. His argument against that great measure of justice and humanity was simply this, that as we could not command the co-operation of foreign nations, the proposed measure

would not diminish the transport of negroes or effect the preservation of a single individual. In short, that we should continue to be thieves, because others would steal if we became honest men. We advert to this subject in order to express our reprehension of the spirit in which Mr. Twiss treats the question of the Abolition of the Slave Trade.

“The circumspection and caution of Lord Eldon upon this subject were represented by his political opponents, as betokening a disposition adverse to freedom as well as to reform. But the ground of his resistance, as he distinctly declared, was no reluctance to redress any oppression or grievance, but a persuasion that the cause of justice and humanity would gain nothing by the abolition as then proposed. The results have but too amply fulfilled his forebodings. For want of the requisite concurrence on the part of foreign states, the total of suffering endured by the African race, instead of having been diminished, has been frightfully augmented. *Manifold are the difficulties which start up, and infinite is the caution which must be employed, in attempting the cure of any abuse wherein trading interests are extensively involved. It may have been fitting that, even at all hazards of exposing the Africans to increased suffering from the more merciless cupidity of foreign adventurers, England should relieve herself from the crime of continuing the slave trade; but justice should be done to the practical humanity of those who desired only, before they ventured upon extensive changes, to make sure that the old mischief would not be reproduced in a new and more virulent shape.*”—Vol. ii., p. 22, 23.

So Mr. Twiss, in the present day, only thinks that it “*may have been fitting*” that the British should cease to be man-stealers; and will not say that the *manifold difficulties* which start up in curing abuses in which the trading interest is concerned, and the unhalloed continuance of foreign nations in that nefarious traffic, do not render it at least questionable whether after all man-stealing should not have been continued. We note this, not because we have the least imagination that Mr. Twiss would defend or tolerate the slave trade on any such weak pretexts. We do not believe there is a politician alive in this country who does not rejoice at its abolition. But we mark it in order to shew to what unhappy lengths our author allows himself to be led, in his determination to admire or to excuse every thing on the part of the subject of his eulogy.

There is another instance of the Chancellor’s peculiar system of political reasoning, which Mr. Twiss treats with great respect and admiration, but which, in our humble judgment, is entitled to very little of either. We allude to the argument contained in a letter from Lord Eldon to Sir William Scott, regarding the detention of Napoleon after the battle of Waterloo. We have not space to enter at length into the discussion, but it strikes us that that which Mr. Twiss characterizes as “a remarkable evidence

of Lord Eldon's extraordinary powers," is neither more nor less than a very paltry piece of sophistry, which after all was not even satisfactory to his own mind. Sir William Scott and Sir William Grant, two men to whose judgment on such a subject the greatest weight was due, could find no ground in international law on which the detention of Napoleon after the peace could be justified; and so the Chancellor at first thought. But it was necessary to find some plausible ground on which the measure could be defended. Accordingly, after the interval of a fortnight, he writes a long letter to Sir William Scott, in which he endeavours, and, as we think, very unsuccessfully, to meet the difficulties which pressed upon him. His brother and Sir William Grant held, that Napoleon must either be considered as an independent sovereign or as a subject of France, and that, in either capacity, there was no law whatever by which he could be detained after the termination of hostilities. The notable discovery, however, which Mr. Twiss admires so much is, that he was to be considered, as what Lord Eldon calls, an *independent belligerent*, and in that capacity to be quietly put beyond the pale of the rules of civilized warfare. And this is the enlightened and lawyer-like mode of justifying the treatment of a man who was *de facto* sovereign of France, both in the functions of the office and the affections of the people—with whom, as first consul, the peace of Amiens was concluded, and with whom, if we recollect right, the British Government were in treaty of peace, as Emperor of the French, within a month of the battle of Waterloo.

The "*Salus omnium rerum publicarum*," on which Lord Eldon at first relied, might justify the course adopted; but if it was grounded on the special pleading in question, it rested on a very weak foundation.

But it was not as a statesman, in the proper meaning of that word, but in the far more effective character of a politician, that Lord Eldon exercised his principal influence on public affairs. As a Cabinet Councillor, his ability and address were undeniable. Incapable of great conceptions, he had great capacity for accomplishing what he did conceive. Every day experience proves that the powers of persuasion which are effective across a table, are very different from those which sway public assemblies. The former faculty seems to have been possessed by Lord Eldon in a very remarkable degree. His clear course of thought, rapid perception, and unwavering decision, gave him great ascendancy over men, of more enlarged understandings, perhaps, but of less mental vigour, and less practised intellect. Even the soaring spirit of Canning seems to have quailed before the unbending tenacity of the Chancellor. It is rather diverting to trace, in the volumes before us, the instinctive repugnance and antipathy with

which, from the first moment of their political connexion, the hard, unimaginative lawyer, shrunk from the volatile and brilliant man of wit and letters. Antagonists from the first, Scott preserved his ascendancy for more than twenty years; and probably the bitterest ingredient in the reverses of 1826 was the triumphant, though ephemeral exaltation of his opponent. In the following letter, he vents his acrimony with more freedom than usual:—

“The appointment of Lord Francis Conyngham in the Foreign Office has, by female influence, put Canning beyond the reach of anything to affect him, and will assuredly enable him to turn those out whom he does not wish to remain in. The King is in such thralldom that one has nobody to fall back upon. The person that has got \* \* \* \*, after having in conversations, I believe, uttered nothing that was kind about Canning, was one of his voters for his Cabinet office. The devil of it is, there is no consistency in any body. Again, upon ‘*ne cede malis*,’ it is better to go out than to be turned out!! which will assuredly be the case. God bless you. Yours affectionately,  
—Vol. ii., p. 284. “ELDON.”

One cause of his practical influence, and one of the strongest testimonies to his personal weight, was the undoubted regard which King George III. entertained for him. We are not one of those who think that any unfavourable conclusion is to be drawn as to Lord Eldon’s manners to Royalty, from this ascendancy which he swayed over the Court of St. James’s. By many men, it could not have been obtained without professions and actions the most insincere and repugnant. But Lord Eldon’s mind was cast in a mould not at all dissimilar to that of his royal master, and we give him credit for complete sympathy with the King in all his political difficulties, and very true personal regard to one from whom he had met with more familiar kindness and condescension than it often falls to the lot of a subject to receive from a sovereign.

The correspondence of George III. given in these volumes is very curious. While it proves undoubtedly the narrow scope of the King’s political perceptions, and an intense apprehension of his personal dignity, it shows a very clear understanding of the most minute political intrigues; and on the whole an accurate knowledge of all public questions then in agitation. When driven from all other sympathies, when Pitt frowned upon him, and Addington, in terror, dropped the reins, he seems to have clung to *his* Chancellor as a familiar and congenial confederate, on whose support and devotion he could rely with certainty. Lord Eldon returned his confidence with kind-heartedness, respect, loyalty, and unwavering steadfastness; and though kings may have had servants who consulted more wisely for them, none

could have been more faithful or unchanging; and we only do him justice when we say that he won this regard by no unmanly or little arts—he was bold and intrepid in all his dealings with the Sovereign, and if he was a favourite at Court, it was because the uniform current of his honest thoughts ran in a courtly channel.

We extract the following letter from George III. to Lord Chancellor Eldon, on his promotion, as a good example of the familiar terms in which he was accustomed to address his favourite servants:—

“ Kew, April 29th, 1801, — past One, P.M.

“ On returning from walking, the King has found *his* Lord Chancellor's letter, and desires the Commission, for passing the bills now ready for his assent, may, if possible, be sent this evening to the Duke of Portland's office, from whence it will be forwarded early to-morrow morning. His Majesty is pleased at finding the Bill against Seditious Meetings got through the House of Lords yesterday with so little trouble. The King would by no means have wished that his Lord Chancellor should have omitted sitting in the Court of Chancery to-morrow, for the mere matter of form of bringing himself the Commission, as his Majesty is so fully convinced of the satisfaction the suitors must feel at that court being presided by a person of real integrity, talents, legal knowledge and good temper. He cannot but add having felt some pleasure at hearing, that the Lord Chancellor sat the other day on the Woolsack between Rosslyn\* and Thurlow, who ever used to require an intermediate power to keep them from quarrelling. How soon will the shins of Pepper permit him to take the coif?

—Vol. i., p. 372.

“ ‘GEORGE R.’ ”

But though this power was gained by no unworthiness, the way in which it was exercised is far from being so unexceptionable. It is made plain by these memoirs, that it was Lord Eldon's influence which regulated the royal mind, and ruled the deliberations of Cabinets all through the different political crises which occurred during his Chancellorship. It was he who prevented the union of Fox and Pitt in 1804—it was he who reconstituted his party in 1807—it was he who broke off the negotiations with Lord Grenville in 1812—it was he who, if he did not advise, was the instrument of the prosecution of Queen Caroline,—and on him with the greatest justice may be laid the public consciences of his two Sovereigns, of which he was not only the official, but the actual guardian, and all the credit and discredit of our public policy during the period of his power.

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\* Lord Loughborough had been created Earl of Rosalyn a few days before the date of this letter.

We know what a fertile field of controversy we open by these allegations, but we have detained our readers too long already to enter into any justification of them. We do not say that the means he used for these objects were direct interference with the royal inclinations, but if we except the last, the results effected in all of them were those which he avows that he personally desired, and there can be little doubt that if his personal influence had been removed the results would have been very different.

The correspondence here printed shows more clearly than had formerly appeared, the extreme anxiety which Pitt had that Fox should join him in the Cabinet in 1804. Indeed, it seems more than doubtful whether, after all, Pitt did not in his heart lean far more to Fox's extensive Continental knowledge, than to the Anti-Gallican fervour of which he was the unwilling apostle. This is proved by one of Burke's letters, contained in the late publication of his correspondence, where it appears, that so early as 1792, Pitt was in treaty for a union with Fox, with a view to the foreign relations and difficulties of the country; and Burke elsewhere inveighs, with his accustomed fervour, against a minister who did not know his own friends, and who would not prosecute with vigour a war which the force of opinion, and not his own convictions, had led him to begin.\* The letters here published show not only that Pitt had done his utmost to induce the King to receive Fox as a member of the Cabinet, and that Lord Eldon was so utterly opposed to this measure that he declares he would rather have supported Fox as sole minister—but that Pitt felt the thing so warmly that he asked the Chancellor whether he had not given the King's mind a bias on this subject. The correspondence, however, bears that Pitt was satisfied that his suspicion was ill founded.

Pitt's return to power does not seem to have been very palatable to George III., if we may judge by the following royal communication to his Chancellor.—

“Queen's Palace, May 5th, 1804, 19 minutes past 6, P.M.

“The King is much pleased with *his* excellent Chancellor's note: he doubts much whether Mr. Pitt will, after weighing the contents of the paper delivered this day to him by Lord Eldon, choose to have a personal interview with his Majesty; but whether he will not rather prepare another essay, containing as many empty words and little information, as the one he had before transmitted.

“His Majesty will, with great pleasure, receive the Lord Chancellor to-morrow between ten and eleven, the time he himself has proposed.

“GEORGE R.”

—Vol. i., p. 443.

One cannot read without the deepest interest that part of the

\* See Burke's Correspondence, vol. iii., p. 516, and vol. iv., p. 432.

Memoirs which relate to George III. during the period when the vigour of his thoughts was contending with the thickening gloom which so soon was destined to eclipse his faculties altogether. There is something fearfully painful in the glimpse thus given us into that agitated family circle. That tremulous flutter of the mind, oscillating between reason and bewilderment—the cloud no bigger than a man's hand to-day—spreading over the firmament to-morrow, and again breaking and letting in the excluded light—and, above all, the restless consciousness of the unhappy sufferer of the dreadful enemy that kept watch by him night and day, are very vividly portrayed in Lord Eldon's communications with the Queen and the Princess, as well as with the King himself. He felt for his royal master as his kindly nature prompted. That he acted constitutionally in permitting acts of sovereignty to be performed while the patient was actually in charge of keepers, Mr. Twiss has not satisfied us; but we cannot here enter into the controversy, and we admit that the Chancellor acted in circumstances of unparalleled difficulty and delicacy, with great courage and decision.

The only other political act of Lord Eldon to which we shall advert, is his conduct relative to Queen Caroline's trial. Not all the partiality of Mr. Twiss can give a colour of generosity to the part he took on this occasion. We speak nothing of the prosecution itself. We only know this fact,—that when the King befriended her, Eldon was her friend—her confidential adviser—the depository of her secret sorrows, and the warm defender and assertor of her innocence. When the King became her enemy, the same man is not only accessory to her prosecution, but never seems to have had one spark of regret—one pang of compunctious sorrow, that his position was so cruelly changed. On the contrary, we cannot read, with patience, the strain of cold and heartless levity with which he speaks in his private letters of one, who, whether guilty or innocent, had undoubtedly suffered great wrong, and had once looked up to him as her protector.

But these, and many other topics we must forbear to press. To discuss them would be to write the public history of the time. What we have already said has left us but too little space for considering his judicial character, on which it would have been well for his fame that his reputation had alone rested. Here indeed, our task is easier and far more pleasant. With one slight variation we might almost adopt Dryden's celebrated lines,

“ Yet fame deserved no enemy can grudge  
The statesman we abhor, but praise the judge,  
In Israel's courts ne'er sat an Abethdin  
With more discerning eyes, or hands more clean,  
Unbribed, unsought, the wretched to redress,  
Swift of dispatch, and easy of access.”

"Swift of dispatch" even Mr. Twiss could hardly call him: but in all other respects, his integrity, knowledge, courtesy, and industry on the bench, would deserve to be commemorated even by Dryden's pen—

"Had he been content to serve the crown,  
With virtues only proper to the gown,"

he would have left a name to posterity worthy of being associated with those of Hale and of Hardwicke.

His tendency to doubt, or rather the unwillingness to decide—the *sat cito, si sat bene*—unquestionably tarnished the brilliancy of his judicial reputation, and very much diminished the utility of his judgments when pronounced. Mr. Twiss's defence of him in this respect is very ably, if not altogether successfully done. It is probable that his arrears in Chancery might not have been so fruitful a subject of debate in Parliament, had his influence at Court or in the Cabinet been less. But having found ourselves compelled to speak in such strong terms of condemnation of his political conduct, we shall indulge in no carping criticisms on the honest fame which his brilliant and successful career on the bench fully and fairly earned for him.

Lord Eldon's official life ceased in 1826. He seems to have been surprised and mortified that office was not offered him in 1828. The reason, however, is very obvious. His influence was too great, and his politics were too obsolete. He was not the man with whom Peel could have reared the ingenious fabric of which the first stone was laid in 1829. He did not make one of the new ministry, and the very next year saw his former colleagues lay the axe to the root of that Protestant ascendancy, beneath whose spreading branches they and he together had so long reposed. Henceforth the old man's days were perplexed and darkened. His whole soul was in politics, and their aspect filled him with alarm and despair. One by one he saw those venerated ruins overthrown, for whose support so many vows, with tears and protestations, had been uttered from the Woolsack. As his health grew more infirm, and his limbs could not bear him to Parliament, he continued to pour out to his visitors the bewailings and forebodings of his outraged feelings: till at last he sank into the grave in 1838, in the eighty-seventh year of his age.

It is not without considerable regret, that we have found ourselves insensibly led to pass so strong a censure on the public character of the subject of this very interesting memoir. We could have wished, for our own satisfaction, that he had been better or worse, and we cannot even now take our leave of him without a lurking feeling of kindliness, in spite of the hardness and selfishness which manifestly marked the man. In private, Lord



Eldon seems to have been warm-hearted and generous—mindful of old friends, and always courteous and accessible. Had his public life not presented so many features of prominence, we should have willingly dwelt at some length on his private history. The partner of his fortunes survived with him, to witness and share all his distinctions, and died, in 1831, in her 77th year. He seems to have cherished for her all his early affection to the last, and to have mourned her loss most bitterly. Their family life was not altogether prosperous. Their eldest son, John, died in 1805, little more than a year after his marriage, and a very few days after the birth of the present Lord Eldon, the grandson of the Chancellor. He had also the misery to lay the head of his only remaining son in the grave, when years and infirmities were weighing heavily upon him. He died, unmarried, in 1832. His daughters were also sources of solicitude. Of his eldest daughter's marriage, the present Earl gives the following account :—

“ ‘ The Chancellor's care and vigilance in preventing elopements among the young ladies who were wards in Chancery, did not protect him against a domestic visitation of a similar description. His eldest daughter, Elizabeth, after some unsuccessful attempts to obtain his consent to her marriage with Mr. George Stauley Repton, made her escape from Lord Eldon's house in Bedford Square, on the morning of the 27th of November 1817 ; and, the bridegroom having made all requisite preparation, they were married by licence at St. George's, Hanover Square. Although in this instance the lady had only followed the example of her father and mother, yet the head of the law would not allow the validity of his own precedent ; and it was not until the year 1820 that a reconciliation took place.’ ”—Vol. ii., p. 298.

His second, a favourite daughter, married the Rev. Edward Bankes, but owing to difference of temper, the marriage did not turn out happily.

On Lord Encombe, now Earl of Eldon, the only child of his eldest son, the affections of his old age seem to have been chiefly expended ; and, were there no other redeeming points in his character, it would be impossible not to feel sympathy in the constant and affectionate interest with which the grey-haired veteran watched the progress of the lad, to whom his hardly-earned title and fortunes were to descend. The following letter is long, but we give it entire, as showing that time, law, and politics had not obliterated the feelings and recollections of youth :—

“ ‘ My very dear John,

Encombe, Sept. 12th, 1819.

“ ‘ We have not yet been a week here, but I have now had time to see all that is to be seen here.

“ ‘ And, first, Grandmamma and Fan send, with me, the warmest

love to you. I hope you got Mamma's letter safe: and we shall be most happy to hear that you are well.

" ' There are a great many partridges, a great many hares, and I think a fair quantity of pheasants. The ponies, Diamond and Dancer, are quite stout, and fat as butter. Aunt Fan's little pony, Dapper, in endeavouring to open for itself a stable door, got its head between the door and the side of the door, where the lock is, and has very nearly hanged himself. He is much hurt, but seems in a fair way of recovery.

" ' The greyhounds, Messrs. Smoker, Spot, Smut, and Fly, (the two latter I shall call Mesdames), are all as they should be; so are also Messrs. Don, Carlo, Bill, and Bob, the pointers. Bill and Bob have been very good and diligent in their winter education, and I think will be towards the top of my dog college. Don is a Freshman, sent down here a few days before we came, but he is a capital performer in the field. Poor old Mat, whom you may remember, a pointer, seems quite superannuated, and I think will see no more service.

" ' Your friends at the farm, Mr. and Mrs. Parmiter and their family, are all well, and they and Mr. Willis inquire much after you. Mr. Parmiter's dog Tiger is in excellent condition, and, when taken out, finds hares and rabbits in abundance.

" ' And now for great Caesar. He is amazing fat, looks very handsome, is more affectionate than ever, and is particularly careful in his attendance at the breakfast-room window, when the good things for the teeth and palate are there: as to the loves between him and Aunt Fanny, they are endless—such endearings, such salutations, such pettings, as no Dorsetshire or other Christian has the good fortune to be honoured with.

" ' In the course of the winter I have had a beautiful vessel built—a sailing vessel of good size—in which we went by sea yesterday, to Lulworth and back, with all sails bent, and colours flying at the mast-head and other parts of her,—a very excellent and beautiful vessel.

" ' We have had a great piece of good luck in fishing, having caught in one fishing about twenty-four mullet, whittings, &c., &c., of large size.

" ' And now, my dearest John, do you ask me why I enjoy all these things so much? It is because, as your friend Horace has it, they lull one into the '*Solicitæ jucunda oblivia vitæ*.' It is because one enjoys them by contrast with meritorious labour at other times; and depend upon it, neither Encombe, nor any other place, will have any lasting charms, unless, in the period of life spent in education, a great stock of information is laid in the mind, and a great stock of virtuous and religious feeling is implanted in the heart. That you may be diligent in acquiring both in youth, in order that you may be truly happy when you grow up to manhood, is the heartfelt wish, and will be the prayer, offered up daily to Heaven on your account, of your truly affectionate

" ' ELDON."

Of his religious and moral character we would speak gently and charitably. He had acquired, it does not appear very clearly how—a remnant probably of the days of his white surplice—a sort of Cromwellian habit of protestation—of appealing to his conscience, and calling God to witness his sincerity on all occasions, to an extent which certainly did not increase, if it did not diminish, the conviction of honesty on the minds of his audience. But we do believe he was a man very much subject to impressions of this nature, although not free from a certain power of self-delusion when interest pointed strongly in one direction, and straightforward moral principle might appear to incline in another. He seems to have had strongly before him his religious responsibility on the judgment-seat; although he was far too Pharisaical and self-satisfied with the manner in which he met and fulfilled it. On the whole, we believe him to have been a man who felt it to be his duty to walk according to his conscience and the law of God; but whose religious conceptions were as limited and narrow as his political, and who had but a darkened view of the true principles of a Christian life. In his last illness he was visited by the Bishop of Exeter; and it is only doing justice to a prelate with whom we have few tendencies in common, to speak with the warmest commendation of the earnest and thoroughly evangelical appeal which is contained in his letter:—

“ ‘Lord Carrington’s, Whitehall, 27th Nov. 1837.

“ ‘My dear Lord,

“ ‘I take blame to myself for having, as I fear, obtruded on you some important matters of consideration, at a time when you were not prepared to admit them; or in a manner which may have been deemed too earnest and importunate. That you pardon the intrusion, I have no doubt, and that you ascribe what may have been ill-timed, or ill-considered, to the true cause—an anxious wish to lead a highly gifted mind like yours, to those thoughts which alone can satisfy it.

“ ‘Before I leave this place, instead of again trespassing on you in person, I have resolved to commit to paper a few considerations which your own powerful mind will know how to improve, and which I humbly pray the Holy Spirit of God to impress, so far as they accord with His Truth, on the hearts of both of us. I contemplate in you, my dear Lord, an object of no ordinary interest. I see a man full of years and honours, honours richly earned, (ay, were they tenfold greater than they are), by a life which, protracted long beyond the ordinary age of man, has been employed, during all the period of service, in promoting, strengthening, and securing the best and most sacred interests of your country. I see in you the faithful, zealous, and most able, advocate of the connexion of true religion with the Constitution and Government of England. I see in you one who has largely benefited the generation of which you have been among the

most distinguished ornaments. Seeing and feeling this, I am sure you will pardon me, if I exhibit a little even of undue eagerness to perform to you the only service which I can hope to render—that of exciting such a mind to those reflections, by which, after serving others, it can now do the best and surest service to itself. In truth, those reflections are few and brief, but most pregnant. In short, my dear Lord, I would seek most earnestly to guard you against the danger which arises from the very qualities which we most admire in you, and from the actions for which we are most grateful to you. That danger is, lest you contemplate these matters with too much satisfaction—lest you rest upon them as the grounds of your hope of final acceptance with God. Oh! my dear Lord, the best of the sons of men must be content, or rather must be most anxious, to look out of themselves, and above themselves, for any sure hope—I will not say of justification, but of mercy. Consider the infinite holiness and purity of God, and then say whether any man was ever fit to appear at His tribunal. Consider the demands of His Law, extending to the most secret thoughts, and wishes and imaginations, of the heart, and then say, whether you, or any one, can stand before Him in your own strength, when He cometh to judgment. No: it is as sinners, as grievous sinners, we shall, we must appear; and the only plea which will be admitted for us, is the righteousness and the merits of our crucified Redeemer. If we place any reliance on our own poor doings or fancied virtues, those very virtues will be our snares, our downfall. Above all things, therefore, it is our duty, and pre-eminently the duty of the purest and best among us, to cast off all confidence in ourselves, and thankfully to embrace Christ's most precious offer on the terms on which He offers it; He will be our Saviour, only if we know and feel and humbly acknowledge, that we need His Salvation. He will be more and more our Saviour in proportion as we more and more love and rely upon Him. But surely the more we feel and deplore our own sinfulness, the more earnest will be our love, the firmer our reliance on Him who alone is mighty to save. Therefore, it is, that, in preparing ourselves to appear before Him, the less we think of what we may fondly deem our good deeds and good qualities, and the more rigidly we scrutinize our hearts, and detect and deplore our manifold sinfulness, the fitter shall we be, because the more deeply sensible of the absolute necessity and of the incalculable value of His blessed Undertaking and Suffering for us. One word only more—of ourselves we cannot come to this due sense of our own worthlessness: and the devil is always ready to tempt our weak hearts with the bait which is most taking to many among us—confidence in ourselves. It is the Holy Spirit who alone can give us that only knowledge which will be useful to us at the last—the knowledge of our own hearts, of their weakness, their wickedness—and of the way of God's salvation, pardon of the faithful and confiding penitent for His dear Son's sake. Oh! my dear Lord, may you and I be found among the truly penitent, and then we shall have our perfect consummation and bliss among the truly blessed.

“ ‘ I am, my dear Lord, with true veneration and regard, your Lordship’s most faithful servant, and affectionate brother in Christ,

“ ‘ II. EXETER.’ ”

—Vol. iii., pp. 295-297.

We now close these volumes, not without the feeling that we have done very scanty justice to the immense mass of interesting matter that they contain. Our omissions will be the more easily pardoned, if we shall have attracted any of our readers to peruse them for themselves. As a work of biography, we do not think that they will ensure any lasting reputation for their author, from the want of historic justice which they constantly display ; but as a repository of curious information, illustrative of the public history of the times, they will form a permanent and important addition to the political literature of our day.

The true utility of handing down to posterity the memory of celebrated men, is, that after times may profit or take warning by their example. Of Lord Eldon it might be truly said, as Lord Bacon said of Henry VII., that if he did not undertake the greatest things, *quicquid suscepit perfecit*. We may gather from his life how, in the face of all apparent disadvantages, honest perseverance and determined industry may, in this free country, command success and honours. But it teaches us also how totally distinct may be the power to accomplish, from the mind to conceive ; and how vain to ensure the respect or gratitude of posterity, talents, rank, and splendour become, if not joined with that true expansive nobility of soul, that has its only fruition and accomplishment, not in the trappings of place or power, but in the elevation and improvement of mankind.

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ART. VIII.—I. *Report from the Secret Committee relative to the Post-Office.* (Ordered to be printed, by the House of Lords, 2d August 1844.)

II. *Report from the Secret Committee on the Post-Office, together with the Appendix.* (Ordered, by the House of Commons, to be printed, 5th August 1844.)\*

THE two Reports mentioned at the head of this article prove beyond doubt, what hitherto was unknown to the public, that in this country the Secretary of State claims the power of opening all letters going through the Post-office; that this power has been exercised; and that, in addition to this, all the letters from or to foreign ministers accredited to the Queen of Great Britain were detained and taken to the Foreign Office, as a matter of course, before being dispatched;—a proceeding lately discovered to be wholly illegal, and therefore discontinued. From the moment that this “Post-office espionage” came to light, the honest indignation of John Bull has been aroused to a pitch and unanimity highly creditable to the moral feeling and sound good sense of the nation. We say “unanimity,” although we are aware how all letter-openers, from first to last, (*viz.* Secretaries of State) have muttered something, if not in defence, at least in extenuation of the practice; in this they have been supported by all would-be-letter-openers, (*i. e.* persons who wish to become ministers); by all the hangers-on of any ministry, past, present, and to come; and by a portion of the press. The interest at first excited has not abated; we hope it will not abate till the abuses brought to light are removed; and it is in the hope of keeping this interest alive, as well as of procuring a radical correction of the abuses, that we are going to put before our readers the facts of the case, with some observations which we trust will not be altogether useless for the future.

On Friday the 14th of June 1844, Mr. T. Duncombe, member for Finsbury, presented a petition from four gentlemen of 47, Devonshire Street, Queen Square, Bloomsbury, alleging that their letters had been delayed and opened by the authorities at the Post-office, as they were prepared to prove before a Com-

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\* The *Appendix* has not yet been printed, and it is uncertain whether it ever will. Mr. Warburton, who has drawn up the Report, has not yet settled with Sir J. Graham how little information is to be laid before the public.

mittee of the House, which they prayed should be granted to them. Sir J. Graham said, that a power was given by statute to the Secretary of State to open letters passing through the Post-office; that he had given his warrant as to the letters of one of the petitioners; but he refused to state either the name of the gentleman thus honoured, or the date or number of the warrants that he had issued for the purpose. Mr. T. Egerton, a worthy sample of the noble-minded squirearchy of South Cheshire, and the Recorder of Dublin, a judge of proverbial delicacy of conscience, considering the opening and re-sealing of letters with false seals as an insignificant and matter-of-course proceeding, did all they could to prevent Mr. Duncombe from going farther; in this the hon. gentleman defeated them, with his usual tact and cleverness. The debate brought up various members, among others Mr. Labouchere—the father of the Post-office act now in force; and eventually Mr. Duncombe's motion was negatived without a division.

Although Sir J. Graham refused all information, it was well known that the correspondence which had excited his particular curiosity was that of Mr. Mazzini, a Genoese gentleman of considerable talents and extreme democratic opinions, who has lived in England universally respected for several years, and whose letters had been regularly opened for months previous to his complaining.\* It was also well known that Mr. Mazzini is a political refugee, who has taken shelter in England from the persecution of his political enemies—the usurpers of his once free coun-

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\* Mr. Mazzini's suspicions were first excited by observing that his letters were doubly stamped—having, for instance, the stamp of 2 o'clock afternoon over that of 12 noon. Having read in an Austrian newspaper that the English authorities had undertaken to watch the proceedings of the Italian refugees in Great Britain, he was led to suppose that recourse might be had to opening his letters. His suspicions were communicated to an Italian friend, who had so high an opinion of Lord Aberdeen's private character, that he strongly dissuaded Mr. Mazzini from believing him capable of being a party to so dishonourable a transaction as that of opening letters, and acting as a spy to a foreign government. Mr. Mazzini, however, entertaining a different opinion, posted letters directed to himself and others, in the presence of witnesses, and it was found that whilst the other letters were regularly delivered, his own were delayed. He then sealed them with wax, placing the impression in a particular position, and it was found that the position of the seal in the letters for him was changed. Wafers cut in a particular form were used, and an alteration was observed in that form as to his own letters. Grains of sand were then enclosed in letters which reached safely other parties, but were found missing in the letters directed to him. It was then undoubted that his letters were opened: yet so strong was the opinion entertained of the honour of an English gentleman—who was not supposed to give this noble character up to place—that foreign ministers rather than an English one were supposed to be the parties at whose instigation some wretched postman or clerk might be induced to open letters. Now, whenever a letter is suspected of having been opened, it is no longer a foreign wretch, but an English Secretary of State that is very deservedly supposed to be the spy.

try—and who is looked upon as a leader by those Italians who, entertaining the same political opinions with himself, were anxious to free it from the iron rule of ecclesiastical as well as civil—foreign as well as native—despots. It was, then, matter of surprise how a gentleman who had lived here in a house,

*Parva sed apta sibi, sed nulli obnoxia,*

by his own means, which were known to be scarcely proportioned to his very simple and moderate wants, without ever being suspected of the slightest misconduct, should have been selected as the Secretary of State's pet. But the surprise was still greater, when, on the 24th of the same month, Mr. Duncombe presented a petition from another foreigner, a Pole by birth, Stoltzmann by name, who complained of his correspondence having likewise been delayed and read. Sir J. Graham would not say whether he had given a warrant or not; he boldly defied Mr. Duncombe to prove that any thing illegal had been done; generously left the refugees to the luxurious remedy of an action at law; modestly praised himself for his great delicacy in doing neither more nor less than others had done before him; and, with an *aria di bravura*, he sat down manfully singing

*Integer vitæ, scelerisque purus—*

at which Sir Robert Peel could not conceal his displeasure. But neither Mr. Macaulay, nor Lord Howick, nor Captain Bernal, were to be satisfied with this swaggering; the former, particularly, was uncommonly pressing, observing, that "we ought not to stoop to be the spies of foreign governments," for whose special benefit and information it seemed that "a Cumberland farmer" had taken to reading foreigners' letters. In vain did Mr. Milnes coax the Home Secretary to say whether he had been so very amiable as to repeat what he had read to any foreign minister? The right hon. gentleman turned a deaf ear to all the entreaties of his hon. friend; and his leader, Sir R. Peel, tried to shelter him under the names of Fox and Grenville, who, he said, had opened letters, although, as he must have known, never of foreigners under the circumstances of the Italian and of the Pole. The Colonial Secretary said, that such a power, to be exercised effectually, "must be exercised without responsibility," a doctrine very convenient for an inquisitive Secretary of State, but not very comfortable for the public, or very worthy of the proud name of Stanley. Mr. Wyse, by proving that the Austrian government boasted that the English ministers were helping them in putting down disturbances, and this at the very time when Mr. Mazzini's letters were read by these ministers, made these per-



sonages rather uncomfortable; and Mr. Duncombe, concluding his reply with the words, "that the Home Secretary shrinking from investigation, was proof positive of his criminality," was left in a minority of only 44, the numbers being 206 for the Ministers, and 162 for the Opposition. This was rather awkward. A majority of 44 on a question of confidence or no confidence, was poor consolation for a minister, who had been told such wholesome truths in the course of the debate. Mr. Milnes and the *New Englanders* in the House, men of no party and all conscience, from whom is to spring a new generation of knights-errant, not being yet certain whether gentlemen before the Conquest opened letters or not, left the House without voting, and went to enjoy "the cool of the evening." Sir T. Harmer, a plain conservative country gentleman, voted with the minority--his colleague, an elegant connexion of a minister, stood by the *Cabinet noir*.

Out of doors, as the phrase goes, the majority was undoubtedly against the Ministers; and the English feeling, that this was a disgraceful business, spread all over the country. Lord Radnor, on the 25th of June, having moved for a return of all the warrants granted for opening letters at the Post-office, the Duke of Wellington opposed the motion, like a man who felt ashamed of being forced to do so. Lord Brougham, with that self-devotion by which he has recently distinguished himself in support of his old political enemies, the present Ministers, boldly declared "that the case was very slender against his Right Honourable friend, the Home Secretary," and defended him for having done, in the time of profound peace, what Mr. Fox did "at the end of the American war, and at the time when the armed neutrality of the Northern powers confederated against this country's naval rights." But, on the other hand, his old friend Lord Denman—he who has never forsaken a friend or a principle, and with whose opponents only Lord Brougham now associates, votes and speaks—thought that the power of opening letters, as now claimed, would not be any longer endured by the English Parliament and English people, and could not help adding, that the use of that power under such circumstances of concealment, *was akin to FORGERY*. Lord Radnor then withdrew the motion, but promised to bring it forward in another shape soon after. This he did, on the 29th of June, when, on presenting a petition from Mr. Mazzini, praying for inquiry, he gave notice that he would move a Secret Committee to be appointed for the purpose, on the following Thursday, July 4th. A discussion arose, chiefly among the law lords, as to the power possessed by the Secretary of State under the statute, till the Duke of Wellington, who had preserved a pru-

dent silence, put an end to it by observing, that, as on Thursday the subject was to be brought on again, it was better to reserve all discussion till then.

But, on the previous Tuesday, Mr. Duncombe moved, in the House of Commons, that a Select Committee be appointed to inquire into these transactions. Sir J. Graham's tone was quite another man's: *Then quantum mutatus ab illo* of the 14th! He had completely "turned his back on himself," as he had often done before.

"He began this business," as was observed by the *Times* of the 3d of July, "with most lofty and magnificent pretensions to all independence of inquiry. He claimed perfect irresponsibility, and refused every sort of explanation. He was supported by his colleagues, and the House, at their bidding, refused to force it from him. . . . Last night things became very much changed. . . . A Committee of investigation has *now* become not an insult but a weapon of defence—not an injury, but an ark of refuge to Her Majesty's Government. Only let it be secret. . . . Why could not the concession have been made at first? . . . In the beginning, the Home Secretary refused everything: now he denies nothing, except a place on the Committee to him who is most able to bring the question fairly forward, or do it justice."

For so it was. To tranquillize and satisfy the public, a *Secret* Committee only was granted by the Government; to show their innocence they took care to appoint themselves *their own judges*; and wishing the truth, and the whole truth, to come out, they refused a place in the Committee to Mr. Duncombe, the only gentleman who had made the subject the object of his inquiries, who knew the facts, how they could be proved, and by whom. The evidence was to be collected by persons who knew nothing at all about the individual facts and particular circumstances which were to be proved in detail; lest, however, persons accustomed to sift facts and get at the truth might bring their skill to bear on the inquiry, and discover what might be inconvenient, all barristers were, *eo nomine*, excluded from the Committee. Lord Sandon, Mr. W. Patten, Mr. T. Baring, Sir W. Heathcote, Sir C. Lemon, Mr. Warburton, Mr. Strutt, the O'Connor Don, and Mr. Ord were appointed to serve on it. Great credit was taken by Sir J. Graham for his impartiality in choosing his own jury, and putting on it five of his opponents, as if the public were supposed to be such idiots as not to see through so barefaced a conduct and give him credit for having added water to the milk to prevent its proving too rich. Lord John Russell, who, like the other Secretaries of State, was to give an account of the letters he had directed to be opened, could not be displeased with a Committee

like this, nor object to the precedent of a minister choosing his own judges, whenever, right or wrong, his conduct was called into question. Moreover, there is not the shadow of doubt, that the Committee was composed of honourable men—members are all honourable men, and some *right* honourable, even though they open letters—and then how could one doubt that the Government wished for a full, fair and impartial inquiry? Why, they said so: Naughty Mr. Duncombe observed, that at four o'clock, the fatal hour at which the Speaker takes the chair, there was not one member of the Government present, and the House consisted exactly of forty members, including the Speaker; but, however, the House was formed without the help of Government, and so was the Committee, all by Government arrangements. The same was done on the following day in the House of Lords, with only this difference. In proposing the Committee in the House of Commons, Sir J. Graham observed, that besides barristers, "he had carefully excluded from the list every gentleman connected with office, either at present or in time past." In the House of Lords, not only were not lawyers excluded, but the most astute of cross-examiners, Lord Brougham, was put on the Committee on the Ministerial side, whilst, on the other, the greatest Judge that in modern times has presided in the highest Court of Equity, Lord Cottenham, was named, in preference to Lord Campbell, whose powers of getting at the truth by *viva voce* examination, have never been surpassed, and who might have therefore brought out more than was comfortable for the administration. As to the exclusion of persons who had been in office, it is needless to observe how, in these two instances, the Lords departed from the principle adopted by the Commons. The Committee of the Lords consisted ultimately of Lords Somers, Bishop of London, Colchester, Colborne, Auckland, Brougham, and Cottenham.

Having gone to work, nobody knows how, the two Committees went on meeting without any one knowing why, for a fortnight, when, on the 18th of July, Mr. Duncombe informed the House, that having been called before the Post-Office Committee of the House of Commons, and asked whether he was ready to prove the charges he had made, viz., that bags of letters were sent for to the inner office of St. Martin le Grand, to select such as it was deemed proper to open; that roving commissioners were sent down into the country to open letters;\* that

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\* The Committee admit that persons were sent down into the manufacturing districts in 1842 to open letters addressed to certain persons. Was there any person sent to Derby? If sent, at whose desire was he sent? We have no doubt the members for Derby have inquired into these circumstances. The same might be asked as to Newcastle-upon-Tyne. The reader will see the importance of these questions with reference to the selection of the Committee.

the letters of foreign ministers were opened; and lastly, that his own letters had been opened,—he had answered that he was ready with his evidence, and would produce his witnesses on condition of being present at their examination; for, as he observed, the Committee were going to inquire not so much into the Post-office secrets, but into the truth of his own statements, and therefore try his veracity, when he had clearly a right to be present in self-defence, knowing what he had said and how he could prove it. He told them, moreover, that as the Committee were not conversant with the subject, they had examined heads of departments and other people, whose evidence ought to be tested, which he offered to do, as the Committee could not. He concluded by begging the Committee to move the House to allow him to be present at the examination of his own witnesses; which being refused by the Committee, he moved it himself. Out of the House of Commons so very simple a case would not have caused even a discussion. Mr. Duncombe had brought forward certain charges; the House of Commons had appointed a Committee who wished to inquire into the truth of them: Mr. Duncombe offers to bring forward his evidence as he would do before any court of law, in support of his assertions; but the Committee turn upon him, and say, “Oh, no; give us the names of your witnesses; we will ask them *in your absence what we think necessary*, and spare you the trouble.”—“No trouble at all,” says Mr. Duncombe, “I know best; you listen to the evidence and judge, but let me see that you have the proper evidence before you.” Can it be conceived, that in addition to the secrecy, and the selection of the members, the Government, if they really wished the truth and the whole truth to come out, would have closed the doors against the important evidence that Mr. Duncombe, on his own responsibility, offered to put before the Committee? What should we say of any court or person really bent upon finding out *the truth*, who should refuse evidence on such terms? The Committee’s plan was exactly that in use in every court of law in Austria, as it was in old times in France, as it was in Spain, as it was before the Inquisition. You might suggest witnesses; but their examination, if it took place, was conducted with close doors, in your absence, and under the strictest secrecy. A secret committee is neither privileged from proceeding in the way acknowledged to be requisite, in order to get at the truth, nor is it authorized to adopt a barbarous and stupid system, universally scouted before those courts and by those governments who wish to come at the truth, and adopted by those who wish to have it in their power to conceal or avoid it.

The unanimity of the Committee was as remarkable as it is humiliating; considering the room in which they sat as their

own, they dreaded intruders, and above all, one who manifestly would have helped them in finding what they probably did not wish to find. One alleges that Mr. Duncombe would thus have been made a member of the Committee without responsibility; as if barristers or parties examining witnesses are *therefore* members of the court; as if their responsibility was the same as that of the judges, or as if, not being the same, *therefore* they had none. Another—and a Whig, Mr. Ord—gives a certificate to the Government that they had furnished the Committee with the most ample information. Who ever doubted it? This *excusatio non petita* proves too much. Who told Mr. Ord that the evidence offered by Government might not be tested by that offered by Mr. Duncombe? Might not this be equally important and ample, though not at all in the power of the Government to offer? Then another Whig—The O'Connor Don—corroborates what fell from Mr. Ord, and talks of the extent to which the investigation had been carried. Very possibly to an unnecessary extent *from* the point; but does it prove that it might not be carried farther in a better direction? Or that a few facts added to it might not, like the postscript in a lady's letter, be more important than the whole of what goes before? Mr. Strutt—after due praise to himself and everybody else, except Mr. Duncombe and those who supported him—talked of the “inconvenience” of admitting the honourable member for Finsbury to the deliberations of the Committee, which that honourable member had never asked; then, says Mr. Strutt, it would be necessary to place before him the evidence already given; else how could he know what it was necessary for him to prove or disprove? Why, this is Mr. Duncombe's business: Let him conduct his case as he likes, and be responsible for it. Mr. Strutt need not make himself so very unhappy about it. Moreover, the member for Derby, as judge, could easily supply the deficiencies of the member for Finsbury, and from his knowledge of what was in evidence, put important questions to test the correctness of the charges as well as of the evidence already received. And if necessary for the discovery of truth—which we will suppose Mr. Strutt was desirous of finding, even at some *inconvenience*—why should not the evidence already collected have been placed before Mr. Duncombe? But possibly in the honourable member for Derby's opinion, the point of importance was not to get at the truth, but to keep Mr. Duncombe out of the Committee; he ought to have been there before, no doubt; but better late than never. Sir Robert Peel knew his men: He said that he (ingenious man!) as well as the Government were quite indifferent whether Mr. Duncombe was or was not present at the inquiry (oh, candid!) but “he conceived that to give permission to the

honourable member to be present at the meetings of the Committee, would imply nothing less than a reflection on the Committee; a distrust of its ability, or of its desire to institute a searching inquiry." English Judges complain daily of having to conduct a criminal case themselves, and beg of a barrister to do it, if the party have not retained one; far from thinking it a slur on their ability or impartiality, they think it requisite for getting at the truth. But Sir James Graham's committeemen were made of different stuff. The bait took. Mr. Ord and the other gentlemen, having no distrust of their own abilities, did not want Mr. Duncombe, and desiring a searching inquiry, would not consent to the member for Finsbury searching for them for what *they* could not possibly find, although *he* might, and pledged himself that he would. Need we add, that the motion of Mr. Duncombe was negatived, and the advantage of the most important evidence he offered lost? So much for a Committee, with a majority of purity men picked and packed by the Government upon it.

Having thus given the history of the transaction from which sprung the Committees, and that of the Committees themselves, we shall now proceed to give an account of their Reports, noticing what we deem remarkable in these documents, not only for what they contain, both of facts and of law, but for what they omit. The Report of the Lords' Committee is so meagre a document, so unsatisfactory, on both heads so undisguisedly favourable to the Government, that we shall merely refer to it incidentally, and only as it may seem occasionally necessary on going over the Commons' Report, a document of much higher pretensions, drawn up with the assistance of antiquarians, with some statistical tables which, added to its bulk, give it the formidable appearance of a deep and most important state paper. As an instance of the little reliance to be placed on the assertions of the Lords' Committee, of the looseness of their calculations, and of their eagerness to clear the Government, the following instance will be amply sufficient. They say—

"It appears that since 1822, 182 warrants have been issued. . . . The issue of six or seven warrants upon a circulation of 220 millions of letters cannot be regarded as materially interfering with the sanctity of private correspondence."

From the details published by the Commons' Committee, it appears that the warrants issued since the beginning of 1823, are not 182 but 188; not therefore six or seven annually, but more than eight; and not for as many persons only but for more; and not for as many letters, but for a still greater number. Mr. Duncombe avers that more than fifty or sixty of Mr. Mazzini's letters have been opened. This—independent of the number of letters from and to foreign ministers, which have

been all detained or delayed—makes a much larger average than their Lordships lead people to believe by their loose and alleviating calculations. We should wish to learn from their Lordships how many lies are requisite in proportion to the number of truths that a man utters before he may be considered to cease to be a gentleman, or before the sanctity of truth may “be regarded as materially interfered with?” And after this we have the courage to find fault with Jesuitism! But there is another consideration. Supposing even one letter a-year only to be opened, the dishonesty of the principle is not mended. If a man steals a sovereign a-year, he is no less a thief because he did not steal twenty. Confidence, moreover, depends not in the actual security, but in the opinion of it. It is not because we are *all* in daily want of the *habeas corpus* that we *all* rely upon it as our protection; it is because we *all* may want it some day or other; and if a writ was to be illegally denied *once*, we should *all* have a right to complain—and would no doubt complain—of it, as *materially* interfering with the liberty of the subject, although we might not, most probably, any more want that protection each in our own person than each of us needs apprehend that his will be *the* letter opened in the course of the year. The *certainty* alone that letters are *never* opened and resealed with forged seals can give confidence to the public; so long as this *certainty* is wanting, we are liable to be made miserable by the suspicion, however unfounded in point of fact, that our secrets are pried into by a forger.

Lord Denman, when the question came before the House of Lords, took a part that left it doubtful which more to admire, the manly tone of his honest indignation, or the lofty sentiments of a constitutional judge. His Lordship, on the 29th of June, after the Committee of the House of Commons had been appointed, foreseeing what they were likely to do, said that

“He could not doubt, when the subject was brought practically before the House of Lords, or rather the Cabinet, they would perceive it to be, not a question of antiquarian histories of acts of Parliament, but a question of what ought to be law at the present moment, and of what was due to all the states of the world, and to the people of England under the circumstances of the present time.”

The Committee of the House of Commons, however, did exactly what Lord Denman deprecated; and instead of examining whether letters ought to be opened in 1844, they began by inquiring when first letters were sent by post. They say:—

“In preference to discussing the purely legal question how far the statute of Anne, in recognizing the practice, on the part of the Secretaries of State, of issuing warrants to open letters, rendered it lawful for the Secretaries of State to issue such warrants;”—and this is the whole pith and point of the matter—“your Committee propose, so far

as they have materials for that purpose, to give the history of this practice, prior and subsequent to the passing of that statute: these materials being such as ought not to be overlooked in investigating the grounds on which the exercise of such authority rests."

This inquiry was more fit for the Society of Antiquaries than for a Committee of the House of Commons as to the past, particularly *prior* to the statute of Anne; for it is not true that such materials, as they are called, can be of the slightest use in examining into the practice in our own days. The Committee were appointed to inquire "into the state of the law," not into the history of all the statutes previous to that law. Fancy a minister getting up in either House and objecting to any discussion except as to voting money, because Elizabeth and James I. directed their Parliaments "to abstain from discoursing matters of State." It is a loss of time and a deception to point out the thousands of abuses of authority which a Secretary of State might commit, and for which old precedents might be found, but which would *now* be considered intolerable and illegal. Not content with Elizabeth, the Committee stop at the Commonwealth on their way, and quote from an Act of 1657, settling the English postage, in which, among other advantages of the Post-office, it is remarked, that it is the best means "to discover and prevent many dangerous and wicked designs which have been and are daily contrived against the peace and welfare of the Commonwealth, the intelligence whereof cannot be well communicated but by letter of escript." Then they add: "It scarcely needed this evidence to prove that during the Protectorate, recourse was had to the expedient of opening letters." With a little more logic, the Committee might have perceived that the question, "whether letters were opened in point of fact," is a very different one from that, "whether letters were lawfully opened and detained." We think that the words of the Act just quoted do not prove that Parliament intended to legalize that practice. The dangerous and wicked designs against the Commonwealth were to be prevented, not by opening the letters of the contrivers of these designs, but by dispatching the intelligence of such designs, which intelligence could not be well communicated by word of mouth. This is the plain meaning of those words. How can it be said that contrivers of wicked designs cannot "well communicate the intelligence thereof but by letter of escript?" They will much better and more safely communicate *without* than by letters of escript, and then they will *not* communicate the intelligence of their designs, except they be idiots. It is the government and its agents who, in discovering such plots cannot well communicate the intelligence of them by other means than by letters, which intelligence being *safely and rapidly* carried by



the public post, under the orders of the government, is of great advantage in defeating conspirators.

The Act of Queen Anne deserves more notice for several reasons : 1st, Because it is not only subsequent to the Revolution, but of a time when constitutional liberty had made some progress : 2d, Because the Act now in force professes to be a mere consolidation of the former acts, and of that of Anne more particularly, from which the obnoxious clause about seal-breaking is derived.

By the 40th section of the 9th Anne, ch. 10, it is directed that no letter sent by post shall be opened, detained, or delayed, except in the cases therein specially set forth; among which is "an express warrant in writing under the hand of one of the Principal Secretaries of State, for every such opening, detaining, and delaying." The following section sets forth the oath of the Postmaster General, who swears not to open, detain, or delay "any letter or letters," except in certain cases therein specified; among others is "an express warrant in writing under the hand of one of the Principal Secretaries of State for that purpose." By the 36 of 1 Viet. sec. 25, the opening, detaining, or delaying of letters is forbidden, except in certain cases, among others "in obedience to an express warrant in writing under the hand of one of the Principal Secretaries of State." The same words are repeated in the declaration that every Postmaster-General is bound to make on entering on his office. The words of the statute of Anne, sec. 40, "for every such opening, detaining, or delaying" were omitted in the oath prescribed in sec. 41, as well as in the act now in force.\* But Mr. Labouchere, who consolidated the Post-office acts and brought in those now in force, said on the 3d of July, in his place in the House of Commons, that the omission was not considered of importance, and the committee set out by assuming that in point of fact there is no difference between the act of Anne and that of Victoria, and that the law in the matter in question was the same in 1711 as it is in 1844. It is

\* The words, "for every such opening, detaining, and delaying," prove evidently that the Legislature intended to limit the power to the utmost, to the case for instance of information given that a *certain* letter would come from a *certain* place addressed, or folded, or sealed in a *certain* manner to a *certain* person : then the Secretary of State might have given his warrant for that *one* letter and no more. And it is just because it is extremely difficult to be enabled to point out a letter in such *individual* manner that the power was given with such special restrictions, the intention being that seldom if ever the Secretary of State should have recourse to so vile an exercise of authority. All these difficulties were additional and effective guarantees to the sanctity of private correspondence. Restore these guarantees, let any letter opened according to law be resealed with an official seal and then forwarded, and we may be sure an end will be put to the infamies lately practised. The villany of forged seals has nothing to do with the law : It is purely ministerial.

remarkable, that after this admission, the Committee made no observations on the facts which they themselves disclose. It appears from their Report, that "a warrant to open and detain the letters addressed to Mr. Mazzini was issued on the 1st of March and cancelled on the 3d of June of the present year. Throughout that period, the intercepted correspondence was transmitted unread from the Home Office to the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs." If the law of 1844 be the same with that of 1711, which requires a warrant "for every such opening, detaining, and delaying," it is manifest that to open all the letters of Mr. Mazzini, for more than three months, on the strength of *one* warrant, is illegal. And what was this but a *general* warrant? It was not a *special* warrant to open a certain letter which contained information of the highest importance to the State, but a general warrant to open all letters which might or might not contain such information—a warrant in fact to search among Mr. Mazzini's papers, and see whether there was anything among them that might criminate those who wrote to him, and sacrifice them to the revenge of foreign governments. For it is to be observed, that Mr. Mazzini was not even suspected of practices that could make him amenable to the English law, or that concerned England directly or indirectly. The proof of this is in the fact, "that the correspondence was transmitted unread from the Home to the Foreign Office." Had it been expected that that correspondence could have disclosed facts that rendered him amenable to the English law for compromising this country towards her allies—as, for instance, arming a ship to procure an invasion either from here or from any English possession—the correspondence would have been read at the Home Office, and the information obtained made use of to bring Mr. Mazzini to justice. Had it been expected that the letters contained information that something like this was going to be done by the parties who wrote them from other parts of the British dominions abroad, the correspondence would have been sent to the Colonial Office, that proper orders might be sent to the authorities on the spot to punish those who were expected to violate the laws of the country. Had it been believed that such a thing as an invasion of a friendly state with an armed vessel was threatened from any port under the British crown, the Admiralty would have had communication of the letters. But the opening of the letters of Mr. Mazzini had not for its object to discover any wicked design against England, nor to prevent any attack against the allies of England, nor to punish any one who should attempt it: its object was merely and purely to communicate the information obtained in such a manner to a foreign power; that is, the minister for foreign affairs of England became the *informant* of the Neapolitan government; and for this purpose the Home minister gave his warrant for opening all the letters.

directed to a gentleman who had never been suspected or accused of breaking the laws of the country where he lived, trusting to the honour of its government and to the law of nations. For according to this law, a foreigner who is received, and who respects the law, has the same right to protection as a native—in the eye of generous men even more. And as no one can venture to say that the letters of Englishmen are to be opened to give information of their contents to foreign governments, still less ought those of Mr. Mazzini to be opened, to whom hospitality was granted, not certainly, we should think, with the secret intention of deceiving him.\* But was it not a gross and base deception, to open letters which would never have been written had not the honour of England been relied upon, and to communicate the contents of them to foreign governments? Is there any instance on record of a government condescending to open letters addressed to foreigners to whom hospitality is shown, on which they fully trust, and this only to entrap them to consider their letters sacred? Is a government to take advantage of such confidence, that so it may be better able to act as a spy to another government? The members of the Committee are men considered by all those who know them incapable individually of any thing base or treacherous; yet not one gentleman has been found among them who has had the very moderate courage to point out the difference of this case from all others, the want of precedents for such a proceeding, and the deep disgrace that it brings on the whole nation. Would not this have been more to the purpose, more honourable, more decent, than to talk so much about the times of Elizabeth and Cromwell? We are surprised at the gross injustice rendered to our national character by foreigners, who consider us selfish, grasping, and ready to sacrifice every thing to English purposes, and for the sake of commercial advantages. But when we consider that a treaty of commerce is now negotiating with Naples, does not the suspicion naturally arise, that we stooped to act as spies to a government in order to import a few thousand pounds more of manufactures at a low duty into that country?

When individuals in this kingdom have chosen to take part with *rebels* at war with their governments in a foreign country, although it was the duty of the ministers to prevent this, although the HONOUR of England was emphatically implicated, not only by the general principles of the law of nations, which were vio-

\* Le souverain ne peut accorder l'entrée de ses états pour faire tomber les étrangers dans un piège. Dès qu'il les reçoit, il s'engage à les protéger comme ses propres sujets, à les faire jouir, autant qu'il dépend de lui, d'une entière sûreté. Vattel, *Droit des gens*, I. 8, 104.

lated, but by the positive promise that was often given by the English to foreign governments, that all that could possibly and legally be done would be done, no Secretary of State ever thought himself bound to open letters the better to carry out this pledge. Thus, when the Spaniards endeavoured to subdue their revolted colonies, when the Turks were trying to overcome the Greeks, no Secretary of State thought himself called upon to open the letters of Englishmen who took the side of the rebels, and gave them advice and assistance; nor those of merchants, who were well known to furnish arms, ammunition, ships, &c.; nor those of bankers, who collected and sent money subscribed or lent; nor those of military men, who suggested plans of warfare, and enlisted men to carry them out. Has Mr. Mazzini ever been likely to give more than his advice at the utmost, and suggest plans to those who plotted against a foreign power? Has he ever been likely to send one hundred pounds, or a gun, or fifty rounds of cartridges, to his fellow-conspirators? And yet his letters are opened, and his friends delivered to the executioner, by the same government who shut their eyes to the assistance openly given to those who had rebelled against Spain and Turkey. These are matters for deep reflection.

*Dat veniam corvis; vexat censura columbas.*

And if this were not enough, there is a still lower depth of shame into which the government has plunged itself and the country. It is mean to open letters—it is still meaner to take advantage of the hospitality which we grant to those who are betrayed when relying on English honour; but what shall we say of what follows? On the 4th of July 1844,\* the following dialogue is said to have taken place in the House of Lords:—

“*The Duke of WELLINGTON* said, he had been quite misunderstood, if it had been supposed that he had said the letters were to be placed at the disposal of any foreign power whatever. He had said that it was important that the Government should have the power of watching all foreign residents in this country, with reference to the disturbance of the peace of foreign countries; but he had never said anything of handing over their letters to any foreign power.

“*The Marquis of NORMANBY.* Have Mr. Mazzini’s letters been communicated to any foreign power?

“*The Duke of WELLINGTON.* I have no knowledge of it.

“*The Earl of ABERDEEN.* I can more readily answer that question, and I can assure the noble lord that not one syllable of the correspondence has been communicated to any body whatever.”

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\* We have copied all the reports from the *Times*, no opponent of the present Government, and preferred for that reason.

Compare this solemn assertion\* with the following extract from the Report of the Lords' Committee:—

“Mr. Mazzini's letters were stopped and opened under the warrant from the Secretary of State for the Home Department, and inspected by the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, upon an apprehension that he was engaged in a correspondence having for its objects designs which might be injurious to the tranquillity of Europe. Certain parts of the information thus obtained were communicated to a foreign Government.”

The Commons are still more communicative:—

“Representations had been made,” they say, “to the British Government, from high sources, that plots, of which Mr. Mazzini was the centre, were carrying on upon the British territory, to excite an insurrection in Italy, and that such an insurrection, should it assume a formidable aspect, would, from peculiar political circumstances, disturb the peace of Europe. The British Government, considering the extent to which British interests were involved in the maintenance of that peace, issued, on their own judgment, but not at the suggestion of any foreign power, a warrant to open and detain Mr. Mazzini's letters. Such information, deduced from those letters, as appeared to the British Government calculated to frustrate this attempt, was communicated to a foreign power; but the information so communicated was not of a nature to compromise, and did not compromise, the safety of any individual within the reach of that foreign power; nor was it made known to that power by what means, or from what source that information had been obtained.”

Let the reader reconcile the solemn assertion of the Minister for Foreign Affairs with the statements of both Committees! Assuming, moreover, the facts as represented by the Committee of the House of Commons, we say that the conduct of the Ministers is disgraceful. Plots were carrying on “upon the British territory,” which *might* excite an insurrection in Italy, which insurrection *might* assume a formidable aspect, which *might* disturb the peace of Europe, which England is interested in preserving. Granted all. What did the British Government do? Knowing that these plots were carried on within the British territory, did they take measures to stop them? Did they warn the plotters that they were discovered and watched? No such thing. They allowed them to go on in full security, but *informed* “a foreign government”—of course the one that was plotted against—of what was going on. They *informed* them, for instance, that the parties were going to land at such a place, having collected the information from the

\* In the *Morning Herald*, a thorough supporter of the Ministers, Lord Aberdeen is made to say: “Not a syllable of this correspondence has been submitted to any foreign power.”

opening of a letter carefully resealed and forwarded. The foreign government was ready to receive the victims which our Government delivered into their hands : they were caught and executed. Is not their blood on the head of the *informers* ? Supposing, on the other hand, that the plotters had succeeded, and the insurrection had assumed a formidable aspect, and the peace of Europe had been broken, and British interests had suffered, whose fault was it but those ministers', who preferred turning informers to a foreign government, to stopping infatuated men from running to certain death, which those Ministers had abetted in preparing ? It was not the peace of Europe that they wanted to preserve, but the blood of their victims that English Ministers wanted to spill ! Oh ! shame upon England ! Even this conduct, which renders informers the horror of mankind, has been passed unnoticed by the Committee, who, in their anxiety to praise and shelter and cheer informers in their sanguinary calling, tell us that the " information so communicated was not of a nature to compromise, and did not compromise, the safety of any individual within the reach of that foreign power." This is a revolting quibble. The Ministers had no information to give about persons THEN in the power of the foreign government, but they had, and did communicate information which concerned people whom they knew were going to put themselves under the power of the government to whom the information was given, whom they might have prevented, but did not prevent, from getting into the power of that government, where they were expected by the help of our *informers*, and slaughtered. The Committee at last, in their anxiety to screen informers, actually go so far as to state, that the information thus given did not, in point of fact, compromise the safety of any individual within the reach of that foreign power. First of all, let us repeat, it did compromise the safety of parties who at a subsequent period happened to be, and it was known for certain would be, within the reach of that government ; and moreover how can the Committee know that the information in question did NOT produce certain effects ? The evidence they have collected may justify them in saying what the positive effects of that information were—in asserting positively that no names of persons or places were communicated ; but to say that *no* person was compromised, is saying what they cannot possibly know, and what they cannot possibly have in evidence, unless they have a certain knowledge of the peculiar and individual reasons which induced the Government of Naples to molest, imprison, condemn, and execute THOUSANDS of persons, and so on with respect to the other governments of Italy ; for the information given by our Ministers respecting a man not

within the reach of Naples, is kindly forwarded to the Pope, for instance, by the Neapolitan Government, if the victims which our Ministers have designated, be within the reach of the Government of His Holiness. And who tells the Committee that more victims, now out of the hands of "the friendly government," unaware of their having been designated, although even their names may have been concealed, may not be "compromised" the moment they set foot on the land of the "friendly government?" It is, moreover, proper to add, that, paradoxical as it may seem, to communicate any information to such governments, withholding names, will cause even greater misery than if the names were given; for, in this case, no one but the parties specially named might be liable to suffer, whereas the withholding of names renders liable to be suspected, proscribed, and even murdered, persons entirely innocent, and for whom it is impossible to clear themselves, as the crimes which are imputed to them on the information of the spy—that is, the English Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs—are as carefully concealed from them as is the name of the secret informer by whom they are cruelly sacrificed. These are the results of the conduct praised and applauded by members of the House of Commons.

We have no doubt with respect to two assertions of the Committee, 1st, That the warrant for opening Mr. Mazzini's letters was not issued at the suggestion of any foreign power. We believe that there is no instance of such a request from one gentleman to another either in diplomacy or otherwise; that no foreign minister could have dreamt hitherto that such a request would have been complied with by an English gentleman; and lastly, that, had the request been made, an English gentleman of the old school would have ordered out of his presence any one who had dared to insult him so far as to suppose him capable of such baseness. Modern noblemen might be above such squeamishness, if we are to judge from what has *transpired*, and it is evident the Committee think so; still we doubt it. But we don't see that for being spontaneous and of native growth, the thought of opening letters to inform others of their contents, is less vile and loathsome. Whatever the Committee may think of it, we don't see that Great Britain has much reason to boast of the nationality of this idea. We also believe, secondly, that the informers did not make known by what means or from what source they derived the information. We are free to confess, that we think the informer himself must have felt ashamed of the means and source of his information; and if we were to put in the witness-box a spy, no matter how lost to all shame and sense of honour, we think that if he were forced to say that his information was derived from slyly opening a letter, trusted to him to carry,

for money—even such a wretch would blush, and his voice falter, in confessing such ignominy.

The Committee continue their Report in the following words:—

“ A warrant to open and detain all letters addressed to Mr. Worcell and to Mr. Stoltzmann, was issued on the 17th of April 1844, and cancelled on the 20th of June. A warrant to open and detain all letters addressed to Mr. Grodicki at Paris, and to another foreign gentleman, was issued on the 3d of June 1844, and cancelled on the 13th of the same month. The last two warrants rested on grounds connected with the personal safety of a foreign sovereign, intrusted to the protection of England. It appears to your Committee, that under circumstances so peculiar, even a slight suspicion of danger would justify a minister in taking extraordinary measures of precaution. The Committee have not learned that there appeared in the letters that were detained any thing to criminate the gentlemen whom the Committee have very reluctantly named.”

When one reads such abominable doctrines, avowed and defended by a Committee of the House of Commons, one would despair of English liberty and English fairness, were it not for the recollection that the Committee was composed of the nominees of Sir James Graham. We appeal from them to the honest English gentlemen, proud of the old laws and manliness of their country, but not boasting of their philosophy and theoretical notions of liberty. Observe, first of all, the reluctance with which the Committee admit that there was no ground for opening the letters of gentlemen whom they regret to have mentioned—and whom they need not have mentioned any more than they did “ another foreign gentleman,” of whom they speak. They do not say honestly and fearlessly, “ there was nothing criminal in the letters thus detained,” but they say, they “ have not learned that there was.” Do they mean to say that they *might* have learned it if they had inquired? Was it not their duty to inquire? And if they did inquire, as they no doubt did, and found that the gentlemen named were innocent and calumniated, why use such a shabby phrase, that “ they have not learned ” what they now know it was impossible to learn, being false and baseless? \* In the next

\* Although the Committee avoid rendering this justice to Mr. Mazzini, we think it right to state that nothing was found in his letters that could justify an English minister in opening them. His friends from the Adriatic informed him that they intended to attempt a revolution on the Neapolitan coast: our Government communicated the information to that of Naples, and led the writers to the scaffold, but so far from Mr. Mazzini having any part in this plan, he did all he could to prevent his friends from attempting to carry it into execution. Mr. Mazzini was ready to prove this as well as the falsity of the calumnies industriously circulated by a person who might be supposed to be of authority, to prejudice the Committee



place, let us consider the consequences of the principles so coolly advanced by the Committee. The two warrants (for four persons and an indefinite number of letters,) rested on grounds connected with the personal safety of a foreign sovereign, intrusted to the protection of England, and *therefore* even a slight suspicion authorizes a minister to take extraordinary precautions! We, on the contrary contend, that the greater the crime the stronger must be the suspicion, before you believe it likely that it should be committed. I can easily suspect one who follows me likely to pick my pocket, but except on much stronger grounds I never suspect him of intending to murder me. What would it be said if I were to give him into custody as a would-be murderer, because my personal safety is concerned? Would my slight suspicion be enough to authorize me to take so extraordinary a precaution? And if it does not authorize me when I have a slight suspicion about my own life, (which, in my opinion, whatever be the Committee's, is worth as much as that of the Czar,) why should it authorize a minister in being *eccentric* when the Emperor of Russia is concerned? A minister, moreover, may take as many extraordinary measures as he pleases, provided he takes *moral* and *legal* ones. The Committee ought to have recollected that the persons whose letters were wantonly opened, as well as the letters themselves, were under the protection of the law of England as much as the Emperor; and that the insult and affront of opening their letters, thereby implying that they were suspected capable of committing a murder, ought not to be put on honourable men, poor, and exiles, and persecuted though they be, *on slight suspicion*, as the Committee have the hardihood to say. Let Messrs. Warburton and Strutt put themselves in the case of these unfortunate foreigners; let them think what would be their feelings if they knew that *on slight suspicion* a Minister had supposed them capable of committing murder? And do they, these champions of liberty, think that the poor and unknown foreigner is to have a different measure dealt out to him? Is this English justice? Instead of palliating such iniquities, the Committee would have done better if they had minded the facts a little more. The warrant against the two gentlemen, Worcell and Stoltzmann, was issued on the 17th of April, and cancelled on the 20th of June 1844; that warrant is one of the two issued on grounds connected with the personal safety of a sovereign whom every body well knows to be the Emperor of Russia. Now this sovereign intrusted himself to the protection of England, from the evening of the

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against his private character: he asked to be examined: but this might have produced some "inconvenience," according to Mr. Strutt's felicitous expression, therefore Mr. Mazzini was first put off, and then not examined at all.

1st of June, when he arrived at Woolwich, to that of the 10th of the same month, when he sailed from the same place, after having been a nine days' wonder. The warrant was in force not only long before the public knew of his coming, but a considerable time after he was gone. After this we are justified in not giving absolute credence to the Report, or the evidence on which it rests.

We are satisfied that when the Committee approved of the sentence, that the peculiarity of circumstances—that is, the circumstance of his Russian Majesty being under the protection of English laws—justifies a minister in taking extraordinary measures of precaution even on slight suspicions, they did not see what a wide door they opened to most serious abuses. And this is the consequence of departing from just and moral grounds. The expediency principle of the Committee is not new. In the worst times, in the most despotic governments, under the *régime* of the worst criminal law, one of the axioms received was:—"In atrocissimis leviores conjecturæ sufficient, et licet jura transgredi." The Committee did nothing but put into their English a barbarous saying, now looked upon with horror in all countries and by all legislators. Torture, as is well known, was declared by the judges in the famous case of Felton, not to be allowed by the law of England, yet it is as well known that it was repeatedly used both before and after the same opinion had been expressed by Coke in his second Institute, who himself was at least once a party to ordering the rack. On the same principle that the Committee have now the hardihood to proclaim in the face of civilized Europe, *in atrocissimis leviores conjecturæ sufficient, et licet jura transgredi*, men of high rank were found in old times, who had recourse to torture in cases of crimes of great enormity, as for instance high-treason, as an "engine of state," to borrow Blackstone's words, and for the very purpose for which Sir J. Graham had letters opened, "for discovery and not for evidence," as Bacon says.\* If the Committee be consistent, they must be ready to admit that if letters were to be found proving any person, one of many who have, for instance, encompassed the death of the sovereign, (either of England, or of Russia when in England, according to the Committee,) the Government had a right to go farther, and seizing the writer of the letters, put

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\* "In the highest cases of treason, torture is used for discovery and not for evidence," says Bacon, quoted by HALLAM, *Constit. Hist.* chap. viii., p. 460, note †, 4to. edit. See also HERWOOD, *Vindication of Fox's History*, p. 398, *et seq.* ARCHÆOLOGIA, tom. x., p. 148. The distinction drawn by Bacon has not wanted followers; and it has been said that as letters were opened to discover the guilty, not to prove the guilt, there was no great harm. It is not worth while answering such arguments as these; they are worthy of the cause.

him to the rack "for discovery of his accomplices, not for evidence," as a *little* Bacon might say in our day, echoing the great one of old.

We have hitherto avoided the question how far the power of issuing any warrant at all is legal, as we wished to show how the Committee have performed their duty, before coming to show how they have not. Among other omissions, they have omitted to state, that *no* law authorizes, or ever did authorize, a Secretary of State to issue a warrant. What is found is this: that if the Secretary of State issues his warrant, then and by that authority only, and no other (the case in which the law itself authorizes being excepted,) in England, or by that of the Lord-Lieutenant in Ireland,\* the Postmaster-General is authorized to open letters. The law, therefore, is to prevent the Postmaster-General opening letters under any authority except this one, and consequently intended to make letters sacred. But if the Secretary of State takes on himself the responsibility of ordering expressly a certain letter to be opened, then the Postmaster is warranted in so doing, but it does not follow that the Secretary of State is warranted in giving the order. A Secretary of State may take on himself to order a person to be arrested, but because his warrant protects those who obey his orders, it does not follow that if he causes an innocent man to be arrested, he is not liable to an action. So it is with respect to opening letters. In the cases of Messrs. Mazzini, Stoltzmann, and other foreigners, it is manifest that nothing was found which could justify the Secretary of State, for none of them was prosecuted, as they would and ought to have been, if not innocent. But, then, it is almost impossible to prove that a letter has been opened, so as to make the Postmaster-General responsible, in which case he would have to produce his warrant, and he who signed it would be called to account. Thus, Sir James Graham, relying on the almost certainty of not being found out, could safely refer to the tribunals of the country, men of limited means, whom he had affronted and oppressed. By refusing to account to the House first, and then by appointing the Committee who were to investigate on public and constitutional grounds

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\* The 23-24 of Geo. III., ch. 17, sec. 30 (Irish,) says that the warrant must be "an express warrant in writing, under the hand and seal of the Lord-Lieutenant or other chief governor or governors of this kingdom." Mr. Wynn, who never was Secretary of State, signed warrants in England for 1807, according to the Report of the House of Commons' Committee; and, in Ireland, persons who were neither Lord-Lieutenants or chief governors repeatedly signed such warrants, as proved by the same authority. The power "progressed downward" from the Lord-Lieutenant to the Secretary, and from him to the secretary's secretary in 1836. The antiquarian committeemen did not notice this trifle. Had they found it in the time of Cromwell, or Elizabeth, or William the Conqueror, they would, no doubt, have brought it forward as proof of the *legality* of the deed in those early times.

the charges that were brought before them, and which it was impossible to prove before a court of law, he has secured to himself, and the colleagues with whom he acted, a complete impunity, as he thinks. There is a public opinion in England that he cannot escape from, which may adequately punish him, and deter others from following his example.

The Committee who have been so careful in pointing out an early case in which a warrant was granted "on grounds which would now be considered highly objectionable," obviously for the purpose of showing how much better the modern practice is, have omitted to call the attention of the House to a remarkable clause in that warrant. It is signed by Lord Dartmouth, and dated the 20th of September 1712; directed to the Postmaster-General. It concludes as follows:—"You are to comply with it, (the warrant) AS FAR AS IS CONSISTENT WITH LAW, *and the duty of your office.*" This is the first warrant under the Act of Anne; and the Secretary of State of the time, who must have known what the Legislature meant, far from thinking himself authorized to direct letters to be opened by that law, leaves it to the Postmaster-General to judge to what extent the law sanctioned such practices. In the same spirit of fairness did the Committee draw up the paragraph respecting the opening of the letters of Bishop Atterbury. They forgot to mention the peculiar circumstances under which that strong measure was resorted to for so strictly English purposes; and when they state that there was not "any question raised as to the legality of the warrants," they state what is no doubt literally true, although the impression they mean to convey, viz. that no one doubted the validity of the warrants, is utterly untrue. The facts are these. Three letters were said to have been written by the Bishop, which were opened at the Post-office, read, copied, and the copies brought forward against the Bishop before the Committee of the Lords on the bill of pains and penalties. Peter Thouvois was examined touching the copies of these three letters, and attested that they were true copies. The Bishop then asked this Thouvois, who was in the service of the Post-office, "If he had any express warrant, under the hand of one of the Principal Secretaries of State, for opening the said letters?" The question was objected to, and the following resolution carried:—"That it is the opinion of this House that it is inconsistent with the public safety, as well as unnecessary for the prisoner's defence, to suffer any further inquiry to be made, upon this occasion, into the warrants which have been granted by the Secretaries of State, for the stopping and opening of letters which should come or go by post, or into the methods that have been taken by the proper officers at the Post-office, in obedience to such warrants." By this monstrous deci-

sion, the fact that there were warrants, as well as their legality, was *assumed*, although the question to ascertain that fact was not answered; and the whole discussion as to the validity being stopped, it was impossible for the Bishop to raise that question. Far from being satisfied, Atterbury, in his defence, mentioned the stopping the clerks of the Post-office from answering, as one of the many hardships under which he laboured.\*

But we should never end were we to go on pointing out the incorrect statements, as well as the clever omissions which deserve to be pointed out in this impartial document, and we shall therefore pass to another important point. The Report runs as follows :

"It does not appear to your Committee necessary to follow the warrant from the time of its reception at the Post-office, to that of its execution. The letters which have been detained and opened are, unless retained by special order, as sometimes happens in criminal cases, closed and resealed, without affixing any mark to indicate that they have been so detained and opened, and are forwarded by post according to their respective superscriptions."

And further on, speaking of the examination of certain bags addressed to particular places, they say :

"This examination has no connexion whatever with the opening of letters under warrant, and it is not the method practised when letters are retained and opened by authority of the Secretary of State."

These are two of the most exquisite bits of the whole Report. Mr. Duncombe had offered to prove that the letter-bags of certain towns or divisions were taken to the inner office, when letters were taken out and opened. The proofs, as we have seen, were virtually refused by the Committee, who, however, do not think it necessary to inquire how the authorities proceeded in executing the warrant, and then add, that the examining certain letter-bags "has no connexion whatever with the opening of letters under warrant." Does this mean that it *has* with the opening of letters *not* under warrant? And if the warrant is found to be properly and legally issued and executed, when there are doubts as to both, was it not highly necessary for the Committee to inquire into the fact, and tranquillize the public mind by showing that the thing was done legally, or to take proper measures for putting an end to illegalities, if any occurred? It is plain, by their saying "what was *not* the method practised when letters are opened by authority of the Secretary of State, that the Committee know which is *the* method ;

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\* It is, moreover, absurd to quote as a precedent of *law and justice*, what was done to pass a bill of pains and penalties. If, on such an occasion, the validity of the warrants for opening letters had been considered indisputable, that would not have proved them to be so in law.

and it is but fair to presume that as they shrink from telling the House what it was, they felt it was too revolting an abomination to bring to light. In the process of this mysterious practice there is one part which is still more disgusting, degrading, and base than what we have been hitherto dwelling upon, and that is the careful resealing of the letters when opened and read, executed with such skill as to baffle discovery. It was this that made Lord Radnor state plainly and honestly, that this was "a system of falsehood, treachery, and forgery;" and before him Lord Denman had, with equal honesty, alluded to the system of concealment in using the power claimed by the Secretary of State, and the "something very like forgery" by which it was carried on. Had no member of the Committee enough of English blood in his veins to feel it curdle at these proceedings, and wish to brand them with infamy? Is it not a falsehood to deliver a letter pretending it to be untouched, when it has in fact been opened? Is it not treachery to open a letter trusted to the honour of the State, in the full confidence that it would be held sacred? Is it not forgery to imitate a seal so cunningly as to render it impossible to discover that it has been broken? Did the gentlemen on the Committee approve of these unholy practices? If they condemned them, why not do so openly? Would they give them the sanction of their silence? Silence! No; they did worse; they did their best to conceal them, and therefore to perpetuate them. Words fail us to express what we feel at such words as the following: "The letters were closed and resealed without affixing any mark to indicate that they have been detained and opened." Now, observe: This merely implies that persons were not *positively* made aware that their letters had been opened, but leaves one to infer that no care was taken to conceal that fact; whereas the truth is, that the greatest possible care was and is taken *particularly by resealing the letter WITH A FORGED SEAL, so well executed as to render discovery impossible.* If even they did not disapprove of the practice of forging seals—and that is a matter of taste for their own consideration—surely the Committee ought not to have expressed themselves in terms calculated to convey an impression which was utterly false.

We shall now quote another passage from the Report, deserving great attention, both as to the facts and as to the principles that are involved in it. It is as follows:

"On the subject of the foreign department at the General Post-office, the secrecy of foreign correspondence, your Committee are assured, is kept inviolate. Certain warrants, bearing respectively the signature of the Right Hon. C. J. Fox, when Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, in 1782, and of his successor the Marquis of Carmarthen, were laid before your Committee, which

sive nature, have, in conjunction with other information, induced your Committee to believe that diplomatic correspondence, when posted in the ordinary course, incurred in this country and in other great States of Europe, nearly equal risk of inspection. How long similar warrants continued, and when they were finally recalled, your Committee have no information; nor did they think it their duty to report as to any practice which may have existed in reference to this part of the subject. Of this they are satisfied that no such warrants or practices now exist; and that public as well as private correspondence, foreign as well as domestic, passing through the office in regular course, now enjoys complete security, subject only to the contingency of a Secretary of State's warrant, directed for special reasons against a particular letter or letters."

On this we may as well observe, that the warrant against all the letters to two gentlemen in one warrant, like the case of Worcell and Stoltzmann, or Grodicki and another, is not "a warrant against a particular letter or letters." This crooked paragraph,\* the wish of the Committee to avoid the subject, the sort of palliation indirectly invoked by dragging in unnecessarily the other great states of Europe, and making out that we were better than they are,—all these circumstances are satisfactory proof that there is something very bad indeed, that the Committee wish to screen and sanctify. Let us compare with this the following plain, short, and pitily concluding paragraph of the Report of the Lords' Committee:

"It appears to have been for a long period of time, and under many successive administrations, an established practice that the foreign correspondence of foreign ministers, passing through the General Post-office, should be sent to a department of the Foreign Office before the forwarding of such correspondence according to its address. The Post-master-General having had his attention called to the fact that there was no sufficient authority for this practice, has, since June, discontinued it altogether."

So then the correspondence which Ministers of the good friends and allies of our gracious Sovereign posted, was not only *nearly* as unsafe as in other great States, but *regularly* and *constantly* sent out of its course, for no very worthy purpose, (and that must certainly be pretty nearly as often as they did the same in those wicked foreign great States alluded to)—a practice which seems

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\* We don't charge the Committee with having drawn up the paragraph in an unintelligible manner of *malice prepense*. We believe it is owing to their downright want of clearness of perception, awkwardness of position in having to screen what their conscience made them ashamed of, and deficient knowledge of their own language. The following specimen of correct and clear expression of ideas speaks for itself: "The successors of Sir Robert Walpole issued warrants for stopping and opening letters of a very general and unlimited character." What would the Committee think if the warrants instead of the letters had been of a very general and unlimited character?

to have been discontinued ages ago, according to the vague, and, as usual, ambiguous phrases of the Commons, but which appears to have been discontinued only since last June, as the Lords report—the very month, as it happens by a most singular, and no doubt fortuitous coincidence, when Mr. Mazzini presented his petition through Mr. Duncombe. We think one might safely bet, since betting is one of the lordly means of ascertaining the truth, that the discontinuation of this naughty practice is not of a date earlier than the middle of that month. But whilst the Committee of the Commons reluctantly admitted that only the diplomatic correspondence going through the Post-office was *nearly* as unsafe in England (where it was opened whenever it could be got hold of) as in the other great States of Europe, Lord Haddington—the first Lord of the Admiralty—on the 25th of June, in his place in Parliament, laid down as a principle, that the essence of government consisted in the power of opening, and of course resealing, letters in an imperceptible manner. His Lordship said, that this power “must necessarily exist in every country having any government at all;” so that in future, when we mean to ascertain whether a country is governed, or in a state of barbarism and anarchy, we have only to ask; “Have the Ministers (for we can suppose Ministers and a barbarous country co-existing,) the power of opening letters; and do they know how to reseat them so cleverly as not to be found out?” If the answer be in the negative, we may, according to Lord Haddington’s axiom, set down that country as having no government at all. Is it not marvellous? We always thought the first ingredient in a good government was virtue; and now we find that this consists in cunningly opening, and still more cunningly resealing letters going through the post.

We have no difficulty in admitting the fact, that in most states of Europe—great and small—probably in *all* not long ago—diplomatic as well as private correspondence was violated. So in many countries—and not long since in many more—men are thrown into prison *ad libitum*; kept there without knowing why; obliged to criminate themselves, by answering questions put to them for that express purpose; deprived of means of defence, their papers searched, and materials to condemn them most cunningly drawn out of them, &c. But is this an argument in favour of such practices, or a proof that they are authorized by law, or that such Governments are good? Is it not the boast and pride of this country that such proceedings cannot take place here? Does not the difference between a free and a despotic Government consist principally in this, that the laws are omnipotent in the one, and the will of man above them in the other? The law of nations takes diplomatic correspondence under its protection;



and wherever a free Government exists, the sanctity of private correspondence going through the Post-office is the subject of special enactments. Is an English Minister to appeal to what is done in foreign despotic countries, as a justification for his setting public as well as municipal law at defiance? Or ought he not, if he is to appeal to foreign customs, to argue from what is done in free countries? Is it fair for a Committee of the House of Commons to quote what is done in open defiance of public law? But probably they did not know it, and being in the humour of finding right whatever was done, they did not inquire; it is however remarkable, that before June last no one from the Foreign Office told the Postmaster-General that he was wrong in sending to that department the letters of foreign ministers, some of whom (we are assured by one of them,) had all along suspected this practice, whilst others had no idea of it, but relied on the principle that "it is an offence against the civil laws, and is a crime to intercept the letters of a private person, because the public safety is disturbed thereby; but there is no intercepting those of an ambassador, without violating the law of nations. . . . Nobody ever doubted that the security which is due to public persons, extends itself also to their letters."\* Vattel, the great authority of our statesmen, does not hesitate in laying down the same principles,† which must therefore have been well known to every person who had a hand in this disgraceful business. M. Guizot having declared that the correspondence going through the French post-office was held sacred in fact and in law, for public as well as for private persons, an attempt has been made to show that *in fact* such was not the case; for a dispatch from one of our ministers abroad being just then on its way to Lord Aberdeen, it was opened on its passing through Paris, and a copy of it taken, which copy the members of the Committees were shown. Taking all this to be true, it proves only that M. Guizot knowing that the *law* was at variance with the *fact*, had courage enough to answer so as not to criminate himself; but does it in the least justify the doings of our Foreign Office? If proof is brought that pockets are picked in Paris, although it be denied by the French police, are our ministers justified in appealing to the French practice as a precedent for giving any scoundrel they please a warrant to pick pockets in England?

The law in all civilized countries is and has always been, that

\* WICQUEFORTH. *The Ambassador*, lib. i., c. 18. He relates some curious cases which occurred in England, bearing on this subject, which have escaped the antiquaries of the House of Commons.

† Lib. iv., ch. 9, § 123.

to open a letter is a criminal action, as Wicquefort says. Good, just and moral governments never authorize the perpetration of a crime. Even long before the introduction of Post-offices, whoever opened and *resealed* a letter was punished, and he who showed it still more. Honourable men recoiled from procuring and still more taking advantage of information obtained in so treacherous a manner.\* In France, in the worst times, no advantage was allowed to be taken by judges of a letter come at in an indirect and improper manner. A person accused of simony was proved guilty by a letter written to the attorney of the prosecutor, before the proceedings had begun. But the Parliament of Tholouse thought it dangerous to allow the production of a letter not directed to the party who wished to make use of it. In the case of the abduction of Miss Turner by Mr. E. G. Wakefield and others, the prosecutor had become possessed, no one knew how, of letters either written by, or addressed to, some of the parties accused. The letters were produced, and in a country where the accused is not allowed to be questioned or to criminate himself, these letters were read in evidence, although possessed by those who produced them by means which could not bear the

\* Cum enim qui instrumenta apud se deposita prodidit Lege Cornelia teneatur id idem de epistola prodita respondendum videtur. . . . Improbum hoc admissum esse etiam accusatores nonnulli iudicavere qui cum possent ejusmodi instrumentis scelere proditis accusationem instruere noluissent. MATTHEI, *ad Lib.* xlviii. Dig. tit. 7. *De Falso*. Is not a letter trusted to the post as sacred a deposit as can be conceived? We are glad to have it in our power to substitute for the instances of Roman honour, which the author adduces, one of an Englishman—the late Lord St. Vincent. When in the bay of Cadiz with disaffected crews, letters arrived from the as yet unsubdued mutineers at the Nore, urging his seamen to resistance. It was suggested that the delivery of the letters should be withheld. “Certainly not,” was the great Admiral’s reply, “let every letter be immediately delivered; I dare to say the commander-in-chief will know how to support his own authority.”—TUCKER. *Memoirs of Earl St. Vincent*, vol. i., p. 300. The following anecdote deserves likewise transcribing, to the honour of English statesmen of bygone times:—“One morning a man came to him (Pulteney) offering his service, that he could open any letter folded in any form, could take a copy of the letter, and make it up again in such a manner, that the writer of the letter himself could not distinguish whether the seal had been touched, or how the letter had been opened. The man withdrew into another room, a short letter was written, was folded up in the most artful manner, was sealed with a finely cut coat of arms, and then sent to the man in the room adjoining. In a quarter of an hour the man returned with the letter and the copy of the letter, and neither Mr. Pulteney, nor a friend who had been sitting with him at the time, could discover the least traces of the letter’s having been opened. The man therefore hoped that his honour would employ him, or recommend him to some other person. He replied, that he regretted that there existed such a dangerous enemy to society; so far from employing or recommending him, he would punish him if he had it in his power. ‘Go your ways,’ said he, ‘and seek your reward elsewhere.’ The man was soon after taken into the Secretary of State’s office.”—NEWTON, *Life and Anecdotes*, prefixed to his Works, p. 76.

light.\* We think that the Parliament of Tholouse has the advantage; and we mention these cases to show that we are not, in all instances as we assume so complacently, the most high-minded people in the world. In 1790 and 1791, the Constituent Assembly of France† proclaimed the inviolability of letters, and forbade their being opened under any pretence whatever; a severe punishment was provided against persons guilty of having broken the seal of a letter, by the Criminal Code of the 25th of September 1791, when this was done by order of a minister.‡ This was confirmed by the 638th art. of the Code, 3d Brum. an. iv., with a very important addition,§ which was, however, suppressed in Bonaparte's time—for even he was not bold enough to avow and defend such a vile practice—by the art. 187 of the Penal Code of 1810, in which the punishment for seal-breakers was greatly diminished, avowedly in order that the guilty should not escape.|| Such is the law in France at the present moment, and M. Guizot tells us, on his own responsibility, that it is executed. Some persons may laugh at the circular addressed in 1815 to the authorities, by Carnot—as was done by the supporters of the Ministers in the House of Commons when Mr. Roebuck translated it for their benefit—but we look upon this important document as a great homage rendered to public honour, and beg to submit it to our readers.¶ In the United States, by a statute passed in 1825, (ch. 275, ¶ 21,) every person employed in the Post-office, without exception, is forbidden from opening, detaining, or delaying a letter, under a severe punishment; and the

\* GUYOT. *Repertoire de Jurisprudence*. Art. *Lettre*. *The Trial of E. G. Wakefield*. Published by Murray in 1826. 12mo.

† Dec. 10th August 1790, and 10th July 1791.

‡ Part 2d., tit. 1st., § 3, art. 3.

|| Il n'est porté par le présent article aucune atteinte à la surveillance que le gouvernement peut exercer sur les lettres venant des pays étrangers ou destinées pour ces mêmes pays.

§ L'on a, dans cette matière, cherché plutôt une peine efficace qu'une peine sévère . . . Il importe de les réprimer (les abus d'autorité); mais avec modération, si l'on veut que ce soit avec succès.—BERLIER, *Exposé des Motifs*, &c.

¶ Je suis informé, Monsieur le préfet, que, dans plusieurs parties de l'empire, le secret des correspondances a été violé par des agens de l'administration. Qui peut avoir autorisé de pareilles mesures? Leurs auteurs diront-ils qu'ils ont voulu servir le gouvernement et chercher sa pensée? Porter de pareils procédés dans l'administration, ce n'est point servir l'Empereur, c'est calomnier sa Majesté. Elle ne demande point, elle rejette les hommages d'un dévouement désavoué par les lois. Or les lois ne se sont-elles pas accordées depuis 1789 à prononcer que le secret des lettres est inviolable? Tous nos malheurs, aux diverses époques de la révolution, sont venus de la violation des principes, il est temps d'y rentrer. Vous voudrez donc bien, Monsieur le préfet, faire poursuivre d'après toute la rigueur des lois ces infractions d'un des droits les plus sacrés de l'homme en société. La pensée d'un citoyen français doit être libre comme sa personne même.

Agréez, Monsieur le préfet, l'assurance de ma parfaite considération.—CARNOT.

point has been considered so very important in Belgium, that the nation have deemed it necessary to proclaim the inviolability of letters, without exception, as one of their constitutional rights.\* In Lord Haddington's opinion, these are proofs that there is no government at all in France, the United States, and Belgium; we think, however, that, in this respect, those countries are better off than we are with our Board of Mercuries in Downing Street and at the Post-office.

Yet, it is on the ground of its necessity for good government that Lord Haddington exclaims—

“Was it to be conceived that a Secretary of State, in a matter of importance—in a matter, as he believed, involving danger to the State, to the Crown, or to the Country, and becoming the subject of a correspondence—should not have the power of checking the anticipated evil, and preventing the threatened public misfortune, by causing the opening of letters that were passing through the Post-office?”

Lord Denman, in the same debate, expressed a different, and, as we humbly conceive, more English opinion:—

“I do not,” said that noble Lord, “I do not consider this a question of expediency or in expediency, but a question of right or wrong. I do no more believe it necessary to show that it was wrong for this power to exist, in the person of one individual, than I should think it necessary to contend that it was wrong to pick a pocket.”

The question, then, is one of right or wrong; and now we should like to ask Lord Haddington, how he can reconcile it to his conscience as an honest man, to put the case as one of opening letters only to prevent and check an evil of magnitude, whilst the case under discussion was not one of such magnitude, and whilst the pith of the complaint was still more than that of opening letters, that of resealing them and forwarding them to parties who were thus deceived by treachery and forgery? Does Lord Haddington think these honourable, christian, and gentlemanlike ways of governing? Is he prepared to contend that the sanctity of the end justifies the dishonesty of the means? Let Lord Haddington suppose that a Secretary of State should think it right, to prevent and check an anticipated public evil of great importance, to order a man to be arrested, would he be justified in causing it to be done by stealth, and by unknown hands, placing the man in a secret or private prison; refusing him any information as to why or wherefore, or by whose orders he was arrested; and finally letting him out in as mysterious a manner—taking from him, as far as possible, all means of obtaining redress for

such treatment? The Secretary of State is informed, that if he stops and reads the letters of a person, he may find him engaged in a treasonable plot. He misses one of the letters, but he is told that the person who has received it carries it about in his pocket, and that it may be of importance to read it; yet the Right Honourable thinks it "a matter of importance" not to have the person who wrote it made aware that he is watched. Forthwith he sends for some pick-pocket, whom he has known at an election, and charges him delicately to abstract the letter from the pocket in which it is kept, and bring it to him. The thing is done, and the letter read; but, not to excite suspicion, it is required that it should be as *delicately* returned as it was abstracted. This is also done. And, as it would be desirable to see some other letters kept in a drawer by him who received them, a valet is bribed to let the Right Honourable see them: the drawer is locked, but the valet knows the key, and can manage to take an impression of it; which being done, the Right Honourable gets a key made, the valet uses it, shows the letters and replaces them, *toties quoties*. Is this defensible? What is the difference between forging a key and forging a seal? What makes the opening and resealing letters a holy action, seems to be the circumstance of its being done whilst they were trusted to the HONOUR of the Government—a slender guarantee no doubt, as times go—the Government being paid for carrying the letters *safely*, and fining you if you send them by other means than the Post-office. But, it is said, that the law is for opening letters, and that people ought to have known it. The Government and its agents have done all they could to create an impression that no letter was ever opened by any authority whatever, except in cases of misdirection, want of payment, or refusal to receive it. This is not one of the least revolting features in this business. In 1833, Mr. Wallace, M.P. for Greenock, moved for the following return, which we copy verbatim, capitals and all, from the Parliamentary papers for 1834, among which it is found, having been ordered by the House to be printed on the 10th of February 1834. It runs thus:—

"POST-OFFICE. OPENING LETTERS. A return of all and every INSTRUCTION, BYE-LAW, or AUTHORITY, under which POSTMASTERS are instructed, or authorized, or have assumed a right to open up, unfold, apply strong lamp-lights to, or use any of these, or any other means whatever, for ascertaining, or reading what may be contained, in words or in figures, in any letter of any size or description, being fastened with a wafer, or with wax, or even if totally unfastened by either."

To which the following return was made:—

"General Post-office, 31 August 1833. No such instruction has been issued from the General Post-office. Every person in the Post-office is required to take the oath prescribed by the Act of the 9th Queen Anne, c. 10, That he will not open, detain, or delay any letter which shall come into his hands by reason of his employment in the Post-office. Whenever it is noticed that a letter has been put into the Post-office unfastened, it is invariably sealed with the official seal for security. *F. Freeling*, Secretary."

Now, mark the straight-forwardness and honesty of the answer: "No instruction has been issued *from the General Post office.*" Now the motion was as to all and every instruction or AUTHORITY—and a warrant is an authority—by which *Postmasters* in general—which must have included the *General Postmaster*, as the word *general* does not make him cease to be the London Postmaster—are authorized, not only from the General Post-office, to which the answer cunningly limits itself, but from any body whatever—to open letters. Then the oath is alluded to in such a manner as to make one believe that under no circumstances, and without any exception whatever, are the sworn officers allowed to open, detain, or delay any letters, whereas the oath contains the exceptions often recited in the course of this article; but which were suppressed, because, if mentioned, it would have been necessary to state how, and when, and why letters had been opened, which would have been inconsistent with the sweeping answer: "No instruction from the Post-office," by which the return begins. Let us now observe that in 1833, four warrants were issued for opening letters, and within the three years immediately preceding not less than thirty-six—that is on an average one every month—of which the Secretary must have been as well informed as of his own existence.

If the accommodating doctrine of Lord Haddington and of other moral statesmen of his school be received, we do not see why the Postmaster-General does not still send the dispatches of foreign ministers to the Foreign Office, as usual. May it not be most important to know for certain what is the real import of certain negotiations which there is good ground for believing are carrying on between France and America, for instance, and which are thought deeply to involve the honour and safety of England? Was it to be conceived, his Lordship would ask, that a Secretary of State, in a matter of such importance, should not have the power of opening letters passing through the Post-office? I could never understand, he would add, why this power should not extend to letters of parties who might find it convenient to carry on their correspondence under the security of the English Post-office. Then we all know that "*salus reipublicæ suprema*

lex." Ministerial members know it as well as Lord Haddington, who ought to go a little farther. Suppose a French cabinet-messenger passes through England with dispatches, in which there is every reason to believe a secret treaty is enclosed, of vital importance to England. Is it to be conceived, that because France does not trust to our Post-office in a matter of such importance, the Secretary of State should not seize the messengers, and open his dispatches. Well; but what would the world say? Ought these official acts to be publicly known? Mr. Milnes said, with great justice, and an official feeling that must have charmed all those who went out *al fresco* with him, "These matters should be shrouded in the full secrecy of the executive . . . and the exposure of these very private matters was very much to be deprecated." Well, then, let the messenger be robbed on the high road, or the ship that takes him out piratically seized and plundered . . . and, if he resist . . . Lord Haddington would shrink from the consequences of his false principles. We happen to know that the minister of a great power caused the courier of a foreign minister to be thus robbed in 1823, and in time of great risk for his country. No life was then lost; but, in 1799, the French plenipotentiaries, Debry, Bonnier, and Roberjot, coming from the Congress of Rastadt, were waylaid and murdered. It is now well known that this was in consequence of an infamous endeavour on the part of Austria to possess herself of their dispatches, which was resisted, and which ended in their murder.\*

But away with these demoralizing and narrow views. A great statesman does not stoop to miserable resources, worthy of base and mean souls. It is self evident, that to open secretly a letter, and to reseat it afterwards, so that it be impossible to perceive that it has been opened, is falsehood and treachery. Now, *falsehood* and *treachery* are NEVER allowed, and can never be useful means of government. Quite the reverse. *ID UTILE QUOD HONESTUM*. It is the reverse of useful to break such great and vital principles for gaining the paltry advantage of some

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\* This is the most charitable construction, as no positive proof of the order to assassinate them was given. Austria accused the French plenipotentiaries of having compromised her with the German empire, by communicating to the other negociators the secret articles agreed with Napoleon about Mayence. Ces articles secrets prouvaient que, pour avoir Palmanova dans le Frioul, le cabinet Autrichien avait livré Mayence et trahi d'un manière indigne les intérêts de l'Empire. Ce Cabinet était fort irrité et voulait tirer vengeance de nos ministres. Il voulait de plus se saisir de leurs papiers, pour connaître quels étaient ceux des Princes Germaniques, qui, dans le moment, traitaient individuellement avec la république Française. Il conçut donc la pensée de faire arrêter nos ministres, à leur retour en France, pour les dépouiller, les outrager, peut-être même les assassiner. On n'a jamais su cependant si l'ordre de les assassiner avait été donné d'une manière positive. *THIERS, Récol. Française, Tom. vi. ch. 6.*

information, and sacrifice them to a despicable expediency. It might be expedient, and, in the loose language of unprincipled and narrow-minded statesmen, it would be called useful and important to lead a man to accuse himself\*—to admit a wife to give evidence against her husband†—to force a confession as to accomplices,‡ &c. ; but a man of honour and enlarged views will think that it is really useful and important not to cheat a man into accusing himself—not to destroy that fullest unbounded confidence which ought to subsist between man and wife; not use force to extort the truth; and that to break through such principles, is a great evil to society. No good can come of evil, and no end can justify such means. And as no apparent temporary advantage can ever, under any circumstances, admit assassination, so it ought not to admit falsehood and treachery, of which assassination is but one—although the worst—form. ||

\* Or to confess in the hope of being pardoned. This was admitted as fair and honest by the Inquisition. PEGNÆ, *Comment. ad Etynerici Directorium Inquis.* Part 3d, Comment 23, Num. 106 : An fides data reo de impunitate præstanda si veritatem fateatur servari debeat due sunt extreme opiniones : Una est Geminiani et plurium aliorum asserentium iudicem, non obstante præfata impunitatis promissione, posse reum condemnare : Primum quia cautelis uti licet ad veritatem indagandam : Præterea quia hic dolus bonus est et ad publicam pertinet utilitatem ut, intellecta veritate, rei condemnentur ne delicta remaneant impunita. Tum quia male promissis fides servanda non est ; constat autem hanc promissionem de impunitate delinquentium contra publicam esse utilitatem. Item quia non refert quomodo veritas habeatur dummodo habeatur. These are the very reasons advanced by letter-openers and seal-forgers *pro bono publico*.

† This also was admitted by the Inquisition. After having laid down that husband and wife cannot, by law, be admitted to give evidence for or against each other, Carena adds : Attamen in causis fidei, ob ejus favorem, omnes in testes admittuntur, et sic uxor contra virum et e contra. *De officio Inquisit.*, par. 3, lib. 4.

‡ This was one of the reasons adduced in support of torture, even in England.

|| We thought this a truism ; but those who admit the doctrine of expediency, and thus depart from the unchangeable and unyielding principles of truth and morals, must go, and have occasionally gone, so far as to defend assassination itself on the plea of importance, of the great harm coming to the world by the impunity of a great criminal—the same pleas, in fact, urged by Lord Haddington about letters, seals, &c. When a wretch offered to Fox to assassinate Napoleon, that great and good man immediately informed the intended victim. Gentz, long known as the *redacteur* of all the manifestoes, &c. against Buonaparte, whom he hated, has not hesitated in writing the following apology of the would-be murderer : “ Un émigré Français, qui ne s’est jamais soumis au nouvel ordre de choses, qui n’a jamais reconnu Bonaparte, qui ne lui a jamais prêté hommage, qui l’a constamment regardé comme usurpateur, assassin, ou complice et héritier des assassins de son Roi légitime, comme ennemi de la nation Française, et obstacle au repos de l’univers, peut former, sans être un scélérat, le projet de tuer cet homme. Il a le droit de ne voir en lui qu’un ennemi déclaré perpétuel et implacable, contre lequel, placé au-dessus de toutes les lois et de toutes les punitions ordinaires, chaque genre d’attaque est juste, légitime et permis. GENTZ, *Mémoires et Lettres inédits*, p. 108. Those who defend the treachery of letter opening and re-sealing, on the pleas often mentioned, of safety of the country, paramount national interests, &c. must abide the consequences of their premises, and approve of Gentz’s morality. This scoundrel was the most intimate friend of the very intimate friend



Lord Haddington ought not to have forgotten that the interests and the honour of England cannot be advanced by an action which no one can doubt is very dishonourable. Those who are so very much afraid that the country will be ruined if a minister be not allowed to open and reseal letters at pleasure and without being accountable, ought to bear in mind, that in those cases when the Secretary of State is really aware that a certain letter will bring positive proofs of a great crime, the guilty will not be screened by a law forbidding the opening and resealing of letters, nor will the Minister hesitate in taking such steps as the case may require. An ambassador's letters, his house, and, still more, his person, are sacred; but every government has the power of seizing the letters, entering the house, and arresting an ambassador, who abuses his character to conspire against the life of the sovereign, for instance, to whom he is credited.\* But if a Secretary of State rashly searches the house of a foreign minister, carries away his papers, &c. when it turns out that there were no grounds for such proceedings, then it is highly blameable, and ample reparation is due to the party in whose prejudice so flagrant a breach of the law of nations is committed. In the same manner, under the pressure of peculiar circumstances, and under the same responsibility, a minister may detain a letter—then it is that the *salus rei publicæ suprema lex* is applicable. This, however, must not be done by stealth, cunningly, falsely, but manfully, boldly, with the courage which a paramount duty inspires, so that if a Minister has actually done an act which turns out to be of importance for the preservation of the country, he may publicly take pride and credit for his decision; whilst, if he has broken the law, he may be fairly liable to account for it, and made to stand by his deed in the face of the nation, and not have the means of escaping responsibility by having recourse to forgery.

In concluding their Report, the Committee of the Commons more particularly affect to discuss what is to be done in future. They say one thing, and “on the other hand” another, followed by a third, to which “another hand” succeeds, and so on they *ambidexterously* conclude nothing. It is a scandal that a difference of opinion should have occurred among gentlemen as to the *utility* of what is immoral and perfidious. But as they have not scrupled to balance the great principles of honour against

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of our foreign secretary, Prince Metternich, whose principles, both political and moral, we are sorry to see the noble Lord has adopted.

\* VATTAL, *Droit des Gens*, iv. 7, 8, 96, et seq. Cellamare's letters were opened, his house searched, and he arrested, although his crime went only so far as an attempt to deprive of the Regency the Duke of Orleans, who had possession of it during the minority of Louis XV., to whom Cellamare was accredited, and whose life or rights were not threatened for one instant.

some fancied advantages that might come from acting dishonestly, we shall easily show the utter fallacy of their immoral and short-sighted policy. Bourrienne relates in his *Mémoires* (tom. 3, ch. 18,) that Napoleon at the Isle of Elba said, "Il en est de la poste comme de la police : on n'attrappe que les sots;" and Napoleon must have known something about it. The same Bourrienne (tom. 5, ch. 12,) tells us that the "Cabinet noir" had existed from the time of Louis XV., (St. Simon in his *Mémoires* shows that it existed before, and he gives ample proofs that it was not idle.) He declares that, as it was known to exist, none but fools were caught by it. Clever fellows did not send by post letters that would compromise them, but scoundrels who wished to injure an enemy profited by it. And this is a view of the case that was as deserving of the attention of the Committee as their antiquities. It depends on any villain to compromise an honest man. Suppose it had been known that Captain Stoltzmann's letters were opened, Any one—the very confidant of the Government, in consequence of whose information the letters were opened—might have written, or caused to be written, such letters to the Captain as to confirm the suspicion that he was a member of some secret band of assassins, and induce the Government to adopt harsh proceedings against an innocent man, of whose guilt the Ministers might have been morally certain, trusting to the dangerous information collected in such an unworthy manner. The same plan is well known to have been sometimes adopted by foreign ministers, who wrote on purpose to mislead those who read their letters. Napoleon, who had had the best sources of information, told O'Meara that he was well aware that the foreign ministers' letters were opened in London; and he avowed that this was done in Paris too. But even he felt ashamed of this proceeding, and hastens to add: "This arrangement was not an invention of mine. It was first begun by Louis XIV., and some of the agents, originally employed by him, filled in my time situations which had been transmitted to them by their fathers."\*

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\* *Voice from St. Helena*, ii., 290. It has been said that in England, too, the grand-children of those employed by William III. continue to this day in their dishonourable trade of opening letters and forging seals. If so, they have this in common with the Paris executioner, whose ancestors have filled, for several generations in succession, the office which he now fills. We doubt, however, the truth of this assertion. The Committee of the House of Commons allude facetiously to the *rudeness* of the Secret Committee of 1742, appointed to inquire into ten years of the administration of Sir Robert Walpole. That *rudeness* was more useful to the nation than all the *civility* of the modern Committee, including their antiquarian lore and philosophy, are ever likely to be; and the indignant surprise of those old gentlemen at the discovery of the Post-office forgeries, forms a strong contrast to the placid smile of approval of our modern stoics. They said, that "the establishment in this office seemed so extraordinary to the Committee, that they

The demoralizing effects of this system are so self-evident, that it is needless pointing them out. This would be a good reason, if no other existed, for annihilating a system which, like a loathsome disease, contaminates and corrupts every thing with which it comes into contact. Of course Ministers will object to parting with this power. It is in the nature of such Ministers to support abuses. Their late colleague, Sir H. Hardinge, said he hoped he should not live to see the day when soldiers should walk about without a bayonet, and he evidently thought the empire would fall if that dreadful event should come to pass. Would the Ministers have been able to prevent the ruin of the nation had they been restrained from delivering up some scores of unfortunate Italians to the mercies of the King of Naples? And how could they have done it, if they had not opened Mr. Mazzini's letters? Yet we venture to hope, that as the security of Great Britain has not been impaired by soldiers walking about without bayonets, so her honour will not be diminished if her Ministers be forbidden to forge seals, and turn informers. We have given sufficient instances of the numberless devices of all sorts, direct and concealed, under the forms of simulation and dissimulation, now by the employment of vague expressions, now by the gentle sliding over of important facts—in all possible ways, indeed, which have been found necessary to support this abominable system. We have seen a return to an order of the House of Commons, shamelessly denying that letters were ever opened; a Secretary of State denying having communicated what it has been proved he had; Committees of Parliament trying to shelter a Minister by denying that any person *then* in the power of a foreign government had been sacrificed, when they knew that the parties that *were* sacrificed fell into the hands of those who were

added the particulars as contained in the examination of the secretary to the Post-master-General." From these particulars, it results that Mr. Willes, the chief decipherer, received £1000 for himself and son; the second decipherer, Mr. Corbiere, received £800; Mr. Lampe, third decipherer, £500; Mr. Zolman, fourth decipherer, £200; Mr. Lefevre, chief clerk, £650; Messrs. Bode, Thouvois, Clark, and Hemmitt, clerks, £300 each; besides sundry underlings. The whole establishment then cost more than £4500 a-year, ten times as much as it cost in 1718. It is remarkable, 1st. That Willes's hopeful son was employed along with his papa. 2d. That many of these worthies, like Corbiere, Thouvois, Lefevre, and Bode, were either foreigners, or of a foreign race, so that this noble craft appears to have been imported. Willes, however, we regret to confess, was an Englishman, and, what is more, a divine and Dean of Lincoln. The *rudeness* of the Committee rendered his situation untenable; and, for his merits, in 1743 he was made Bishop of St. David's, and, in the same year transferred to Bath and Wells, which he held for more than twenty years. Corbiere had some sinecure given to him, and died in 1743. The "decipherers" then disappeared from the list of dignitaries at the Secretary of State's Office; but the mystery of their craft continued in request to this day. Shall no member get a return of the present establishment and its members, that they may be held up to the admiration and gratitude of Great Britain?

informed by that Minister where to wait for them ; we have seen these Committees mis-state numbers and dates, as well as use indefinite expressions, or *forget* to notice striking facts. And was all this for a great, national, important object—as might dazzle the understanding or blunt the moral sense of patriotic Committeemen ? Oh, no : all this to support a Government who volunteered its services as a spy to the King of Naples, and to enable it to continue with impunity, amidst the execration of the civilized world, an ignoble and abhorred vocation, which hitherto money alone has forced on baseness.

*Note to the article on Sir Humphry Davy.*—At p. 73, it is said, ‘ that the specific gravity of the whole globe is supposed to be less than that of even the rocks : ’ it should have been added, ‘ when calculated for the same distance from the centre.’ The whole globe is more than twice as dense as the rocks without this correction, for the different distances of the different concentric planes from the centre of the world.







